

O P O L E Y T A;

OR,

A Tale of Ind.

A POEM,
IN FOUR CANTOS.



9124

BY

BERTIE AMBROSSE.

"Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum."

LUCRET. l. 1.

821-91
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LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

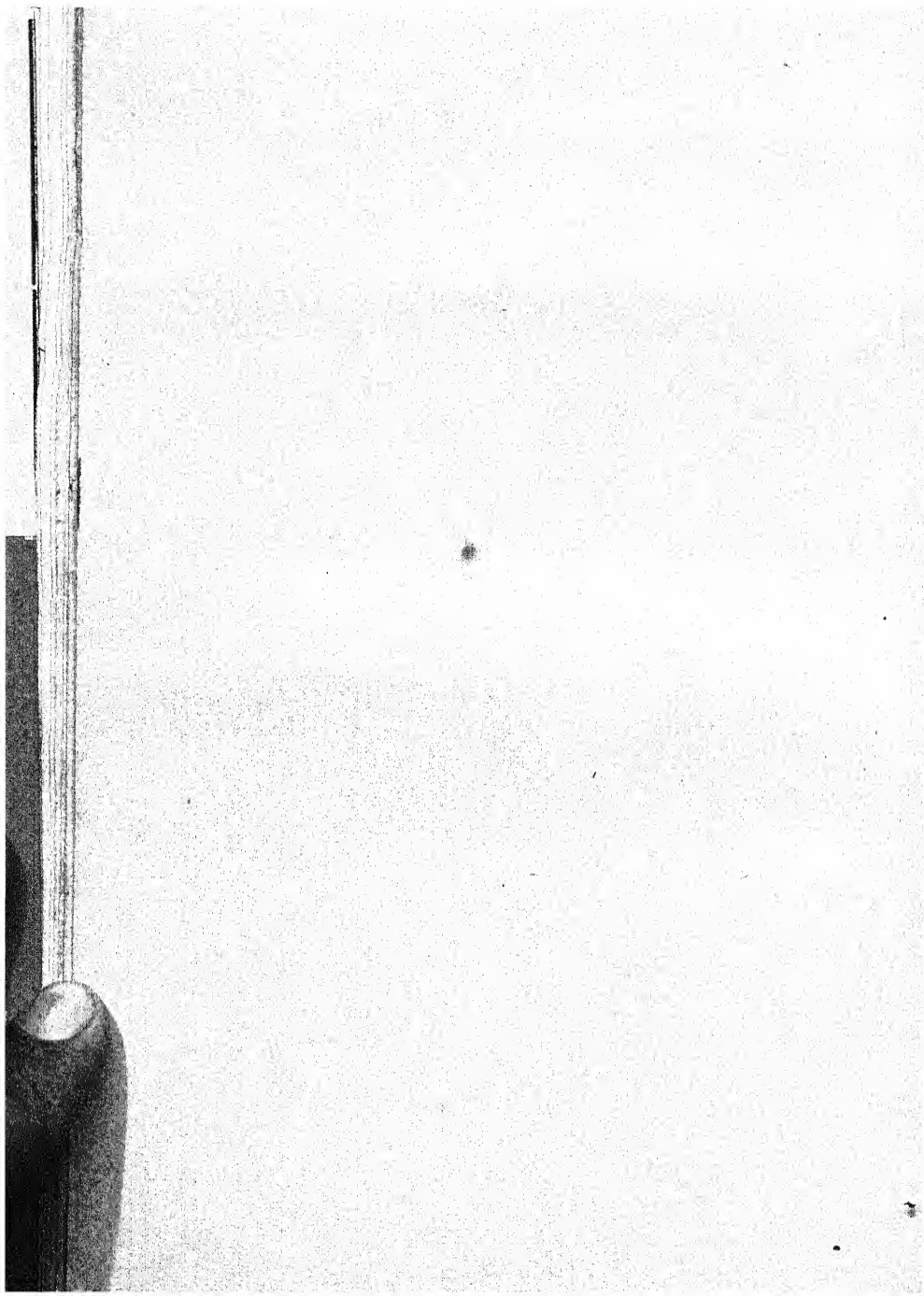
1815.

T. DAVISON, Lombard-street,
Whitefriars, London,

TO
SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH,
THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED,
WITH SINCERE FEELINGS
OF ADMIRATION, RESPECT, AND GRATITUDE,
BY HIS OBEDIENT
AND OBLIGED SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.

"Est nobis voluisse satis."

Tibul. l. 4.



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following poem was commenced by the author merely to pass away the hours on a long and tedious voyage. It was far from his intention to trespass on public patience by printing the effusion of his idle hours, nor could he ever have been seduced into such presumption, had he not been vain of the name which countenances his performance.

ERRATA.

- In page 52, line 12, after *throe*, insert a comma.
- Page 58, line 5, dele comma after *eye*.
- Page 79, line 15, for *enjoy*, read *enjoyed*.
- Page 87, line 2, for *relinquish*, read *relinquished*.

OPOLEYTA.

CANTO I.

THE COUNCIL.

I.

THE hour of eve was come, the day was fled,
The sun had set in melancholy red,
The gates of Opoleyt were closed; the guard
With cautious vigilance the wicket barred;
The lingering light, wan widow of the day,
Shed on the darkening towers a dusky ray;
Around the walls the vigil bands had passed,
The watchword and the countersign were cast;
The dubious sentinel would pause to hear
What soft and hostile footsteps wandered near.
Amid the gloom, anon his fancy spies
Approaching forms, the mockery of his eyes;
Anon the rustling bowers confirm his fear,
Some whispered guile assails his wistful ear.
"Who comes?" aloud with throbbing breast, he cries
The echoed sound along the turrets dies.

II.

But while on Opoleyta's battled arch
 The ruminating sentry keeps his march,
 And stillness dwells in every guarded tow'r,
 'Tis now the city's gay and festive hour,
 And minstrel pipe and chime¹ of temple bell,
 And sacred quires the gale of even swell;
 The thronged pagodas fume with holy fire,
 And incense grateful to their gods' desire.
 In soft luxuriance laid the proud and high,
 'Mid garden balms inhale the zephyr sigh;
 While female bands in amorous gesture shed
 Fresh showers of roses o'er the dewy bed,
 Or in soft airs, the languid sense to move,
 With bland enchantment weave their odes to love.

III.

Now to their subterranean vaults were gone
 Th' athlete, the pugilist, and stout pheilwān.
 With blushing paint besmeared the taleem owns
 The vigorous health of abstinence's sons.
 There the quick wrestler strives his man to throw,
 While toilsome showers run lavish from his brow:
 There wields the vast muqdoors, in scanty space,
 The staunch pheilwān, and gives their motion grace:
 Here one the dun; and, lo! with rattling jar,
 The lazem² keeps its own laborious calendar.

IV.

Yet while in revels free the city spent
 The fleeting hours, on toil or pleasure bent;

In high Durbar the Rajah, sorrow-fraught,
From his brave peers befitting council sought;
But not in golden palaces or halls
Perfumed with flowers, or cooled with fountain falls
Th' assembled peers were met; deep under ground
Asylum due the pensive meeting found;
In realms as drear as those Cocytus laves,
With doleful tone and querimonious waves,
Close by Oblivion's thick and murky stream,
That blots the record of life's anxious dream.
From immemorial time it was decreed,
That Opoleyta's arms should ne'er succeed,
If e'er disusing those austere abodes,
(The mighty work of genealogic gods),
The Rajah sought, in less religious fane,
Council, which there unsought, were sought in vain.

V.

Of granite rock, the excavation frowned
Through feeble darkness o'er the sacred ground.
Scarce may the rearing columns' shade aright
Be viewed distinct by that imperfect light,
Save where through mountain clefts the day-beams fall
On ponderous shaft and storied capital,
Which firm their proud stupendous stations hold,
Of countless time incalculably old;
Casting their prostrate umbrage on the deep,
That holds its bosom in eternal sleep,
Nor variance knows; still on its pool displayed
The dark reflection of unchanging shade.

Seldom was seen an idle eastern swell
Heave thro' the drowsy whole, ere yet it fell;
But partial throes would linger through the deep
In sad resemblance of the death hour's sleep;
And seldom heard was that dead lake to throw
Around its strand the waters to and fro,
Nor any sound, save when redundant waves
Fell in the gulp of cold adjacent caves,
Rocked in those hollow beds with murmurs dull,
As waves that search the deluged vessel's hull.
By unctuous torches, which inconstant flared,
The lowering chiefs at intervals appeared;
They obvious owned some aggravating pain,
And solemn sadness wrapped the thoughtful train.

VI.

The Rajah's form, though green his age,
Shewed mark of hard mischance and woe;
And never frontispiece more sad
A tome of tragic story had,
That could the tender heart engage,
And bid the stream of pity flow,
Than that pale cheek, that grief imprinted brow.

VII.

'Twas not that years had bleached his head,
Or battle toil had ashed his cheek,
But that the wanton Fortune's frown
Had there her paltry triumph shown,
And sadness on the goodly shed,

As wont her foul caprice to wreak,
Not on audacious guilt, but on the meek.

VIII.

His eye not yet had ceased to glow ;
But, ah ! how brighter far it shone
When gay Sagoona met its smile,
Or dried its tear, alas ! the while ;
Or, when with sympathetic woe,
She smoothed his brow, the battle done,
And blessed his name with every setting sun.

IX.

His shield and sword the Rajah held,
His head was rested on his hand ;
Full wide he gazed, yet looked on nought,
So deep, so seriously he thought :
The gnawing theme his proud heart swelled ;
Nor heeded he the lordly band,
That round him made their reverential stand.

X.

Solemn, those martial peers condoled
With all their prince's misery ;
For fathers there among them stood,
Of angered heart, and woeful mood,
Of feeling soft, of courage bold ;
Conscious how keen the agony
For loss of one—sole—darling progeny.

XI.

The aged chiefs, their eyes hard fixed,
Thought to retrieve the captured child;
But younger peers the white cymar
Crumpled, or grasped the cimetar,
Or hand on front, reflection mixed
With vengeful soul, and vision wild,
Shewed how they bore their prince's fame defiled.

XII.

Long time had fled since there bestowed,
The chiefs forgot the sacred rite,
That to the temple god was due:
The Rajah rose, then two by two
Around Gunputhee's shrine they strewed
The purest wave, and flowrets white,
Soliciting the sapient godhead's light.³

XIII.

Performed that ceremony high,
Sad Abba lost in fancies deep,
Instinctive to his station went,
Nor to the lofty warriors bent,
But held on earth his steady eye:
To woe long known, estranged from sleep,
Oh! destined ne'er to smile, but aye to weep.

XIV.

Angered such cold delay should be
'Mid soldiers proved, and captains hold;

A chief with life's young ardor fraught,
Spoke, reckless that his passion wrought :
'Twas plain he gave his council free.
His eyes with indignation rolled,
As hand on hilt his dauntless mind he told.

XV.

This youth was born for man's esteem,
For woman's love was formed in all ;
For friends his heart was most sincere,
He fought for them, or shed a tear,
On every sympathetic theme.
Him honor swayed with her proud call,
Misfortune ne'er could change, nor fear appal.

XVI.

His bright black eye could well declare
Love's tenderness or choler's fire,
And truth was on his front displayed ;
Around his neck thick jet locks strayed,
Young strength was his, and lofty air :
Such gifts conjoined delight inspire
In India's sex, and kindle soft desire.

XVII.

" Befits it us in weeds of war,
" This show of woman's weakly care,
" While by our sides our sabres swing,
" Meet steel to vindicate our king ;
" And teach oppression far and near,

" Though Opoleyta's sons are rare,
" Their hearts are firm, and what they will, they dare.

XVIII.

" Or more beseems it hence to go,
" With supplicating, abject mien,
" And kiss the hand that stole the maid?
" Or at the Moslem's feet, if laid
" In humble dust, we suppliant bow
" To gather from his softened spleen
" This boon—a harlot princess home again?

XIX.

" Give me, ye peers, (a chieftain prays),
" Me to revenge and to restore;
" Be mine to lead our daring band,
" O'er guilt triumphantly to stand,
" Or there to end my tedious days.
" Firm to the last, tho' drenched in gore,
" These limbs shall bear me as they often bore!

XX.

" Oh, that the hoary foe could gain
" Courage to meet on battle field;
" Maugre his martial skill, I trow,
" That many a wound and sturdy blow
" Should greet this trunk, and this young brain,
" Ere Appa fell or sought to yield,
" Or that bold traitor had my death lot sealed."

CANTO I.

XXI.

His ire was fierce, half failed his speech,
Lowered his dark brow, rushed forth his brand :
“ Yet, damned chief!” quoth he, “ thoul’t rue
“ That Opoleyta’s blades you drew;
“ And those grey locks thy scull that bleach,
“ In blood and dust shall shame the sand,
“ While guilt and sin thy soul to hell remand.”

XXII.

Candor and fire so strongly move,
Where’er their potencies combine,
Concerted schemes of faction fail ;
And like the vessel in the gale,
Whither the mighty torrents rove,
Succumbing to the godlike voice
Great souls obey,* and though subdued, rejoice.

XXIII.

Needs but one spark of fire impart
To breasts where noble spirit lives :
Fierce the contagion fires the whole,
Awakes to deed the slumbering soul,
Pours a proud impulse to the heart ;
Man from his vulgar office rives,
And god-like acts to human nature gives.

XXIV.

Yea! that Durbar, vindictively,
Roused with the youthful Rajjepoot’s fire,

In vengeful occupation laid
Their hands on baldric and on blade ;
From each wrath lord indignantly,
In wild disorder burst his ire,
Quick as the flames that wrap the kindled pyre.

XXV.

But hark ! a melancholy note
Now swelled the seeming weary breeze,
Which rarely in that cavern moaned ;
So woeful, sad, and sorry toned,
As ne'er from boding raven's throat
Proceeds, when gloomy night to please
She shrieks a fate from dark funereal trees.

XXVI.

Again that sound of sorrow given !
It told of old neglected love.
Ah, welladay ! the thought might well
The stricken breast of sadness swell.
Who reckless falls from such a heaven ?
For heaven is theirs who ever prove
The holy bonds of consecrated love.

SONG HEARD.

" I love to shed my evening tear
" Upon my dungeon grating bar,
" My old and sorry calendar ;
" My bliss is fled for evermore.
" I wail the happiness I joyed,
" Ere tyrant force that charm destroyed,

“ When love alone my soul employed,
 “ In sunshine, happy days of yore.”

XXVII.

Amazement seized the martial train,
 All paused to greet the melody;
 Abba it roused as from a trance,
 Who forth with princely amenaunce *,
 To whence complained that tristful strain,
 Paced on with due solemnity,
 When lo! a man of nameless misery.

XXVIII.

A fissure gave a moonlight ray
 To view his wretched countenance;
 A sharp serseja^s was his bed,
 And at his rough, uncleanly head
 The sacred books in order lay;
 On his scored front, of chill intense,
 Slow drops from high, red vessels aye dispense.

XXIX.

In bigot weeds, his faded form
 Could still declare that former days
 Had known him more than meek devote;
 He seemed t' have been a warrior stout,
 The victim of life's luckless storm;
 Estranged from man, unheeding praise,
 Above the world—he chid but fate's delays.

* “ Well kend him so far space,
 “ Th' enchanter by his arms and amenance.”

Fairie Queene.

XXX.

For years that lonely cell contained
Himself, and all his unknown woes ;
Nor aught of worldly pleasure brought
This eremite to ease his thought,
Save one poor vene; when memory pained
He woke its strains, and soothed the throes
Which nought save music's power could compose.

XXXI.

Him from his prison, self imposed,
The king's behest immediate brought,
In presence of the peers to raise
The melody of Persic⁶ lays.
But still, whene'er his lips unclosed,
His answers were with mystery fraught,
Perplexed and mingled with some wayward thought.

XXXII.

Oft to commence the stranger strove,
It seemed himself these strains had wove,
The lorn complaints of injured love,
For oft he shed a tear :
When scenes of youth, and former days,
Shot o'er his mind with transient blaze,
And memory cast its glancing rays
On parted pleasure's bier.

XXXIII.

Again essayed that devotee
To wake his vene to harmony ;

Oh! fain he was his strains should be
So marked by son of man:
For sympathy to souls aggrieved
Is sorrow's burthen half relieved:
Joyful he smiled, the nod received,
The hermit thus began.

XXXIV.

THE HERMIT'S SONG.

Behold! the moon with feeble sheen
Now gilds yon grove of sable green,
And as thro' heaven's blue arc serene
Her steady course she holds:
The skirt of every fleecy cloud,
That o'er her throws its transient shroud,
She gilds with yellow lustre proud,
Then soft her smile unfolds.
The ray on yonder mouldered towers
Descends to greet those cold wild flowers
That bloom alone in evening hours,
The silent tide of love:
Now gentle zephyrs sigh in sleep,
The west now tints the glimmering deep,
And shining dew in silence weep
On every spangled grove;
Now reigns the bliss unknown to crime,
Now dēvuls peal their mellow chime,
And western blushes own the time
To love's embraces dear.

Illumined lies the still sea wave,
The monument that marks the grave
Of olden saint, and hero brave,

In solemn lustre peer.

Then hie we to our roseate bed,
Fresh flowers shall rest thy braided head,
And evening spirits kindly shed

Round thee a calm repose ;
And love shall thro' thy slumbers breathe
A pure desire, and all beneath
Be hushed, while thy soft waist I wreath,
Forgetful of my woes.

End of the Song.

XXXV.

“ Thou wonderest, chief, that I should pay
“ A tear to so uncouth a lay,
“ Yet sweep the strings so happily;
“ That this, so low and humble strain,
“ Should o'er my aged bosom gain,
“ And warm my heart so cheerily.

XXXVI.

“ Trust me I do not deem the air
“ Deserving of thy princely ear,
“ Nor rate these sounds so worthily ;
“ And though 'tis but a simple thing,
“ I still must weep whene'er I sing,
“ What once I warbled merrily.

XXXVII.

" A maiden taught me this same strain,
" In happy days, in pleasure's reign,
 " Times that we passed how lovingly!
" Ere yet a tyrant's guilty lust
" Had this once dauntless bosom burst,
" And all my hours of life accurst
 " With sorrow everlastingly.

XXXVIII.

" Now that I hold her days are o'er,
" And aye her secret fate deplore,
" And time for me its hours, no more,
 " Of happiness shall roll :
" Where holy fonts the flowrets lave,
" Shaded by cypress boughs that wave
" In idle motion o'er the grave
 " Of many a sainted soul ;
" At even's gloom and pensive hour,
" I woo her fancied burial bower,
" There drop my wonted mournful show'r,
 " Tears shed, oh ! how deservedly.
" But where she rests, and when she died,
" To me this knowledge is denied."—
A gleam of high majestic pride
 Broke on his altering mien :
A thought bewrayed his brightening eyes,
Of vengeful soul, and high emprise,
And though in that fanatic guise,
 The chief or prince was seen.

For though misfortune's wearing woe
Drive from the eye its wonted glow,
And o'er the manly visage throw
 Its melancholy hue ;
Yet in that breast, if honor burned,
Oh ! never from mischance it learned
To crouch at fate when fortune spurned,
 And scattered ills undue ;
But souls that scoff at hard mischance
Bear not suspicion's sneaking glance,
But roused from their lethargic trance,
 And more than newly born,
Are trebly fired ; and natures high
Can better brook distress, or die,
Than deign to own compassion's sigh,
 The dastard cloak of scorn.

XXXIX.

There broke his tale : a sigh expressed,
That bigotry within his breast
Had not the virtuous flame depressed ;
 In nature's path he trod :
Though in the forms of pain precise,
No sacred, hypocritic vice
Could yet his native heart entice
 To shame his lore of God.
He rose ; nor blushed he that a tear
On his wan visage should appear,
And by such testimony bear
 Concern for human kind.

Then lowly bent, and towards his aisle
Casting a look of woe the while,
A wistful, retrospective smile,

On happy days behind ;
Seeming within to ruminate,
How various were the strokes of fate,
And yet triumphantly elate,

To spurn its hardships rude :
(For, saving love or friendship oft
Would urge their kind, emotions soft,
Of earthly change he ever scoffed

The worst vicissitude.)

He stayed his step, and held his eye
In meaning gaze on Appajee ;
And heaving a distressful sigh,

Prophetically said :

“ Youth, thou art brave, art noble, good,

“ Beware thy hands be not imbrued

“ Unconsciously in father’s blood,

“ But spare his sacred head ;

“ For time shall come when thou shalt know

“ Thy parent who, and who the foe,

“ That o’er thy birth hath dared to throw

“ This dark mysterious shed :

“ Though wronged by him, if e’er it be

“ Occasion of revenge you see,

“ Recall this warning homily,

“ Revere his hoary hair ;

“ For never son who father slew,

“ Though wronged by him, or o’er him threw

“ Dishonor, honor ever knew.

“ Beware ! beware ! beware !”

XL.

Amazed were all ; for Appa's birth,
Though known his prowess, and his worth,
In aught that may avail or grace
A chief of such exalted place,
Was secret, clouded, and obscure.
Yet slander's baleful voice impure,
Declared the youth of regal stamp ;
For if in council, or in camp,
Or if in point of luscious fruit,
Or bent on heavenly love's pursuit,
Compared with all (whosever son)
He rose in the comparison :
And hence 'twas deemed ecstatic bliss
Alone had formed a youth like this.
But why in lone sequestered school,
Religion's pride, and bigot rule,
That chill the heart, and warp the mind,
And cheat the sense of human kind,
Were given to form a princely child—
That mystery every peer beguiled.

XLI.

What dear conjectures fleeting roll
O'er Appa's wide dilating soul ;
In speechless wonderment he heard,
Mistrustful of the hermit's word ;
And helpless as the rocking bark,
Dismantled in the stormy dark,
All lightning-blasted, tempest-tossed,
In wild amazement's fancies lost.

Strong o'er the Rajah's wondering mien,
Regret, by turns, and hope were seen ;
While hardly from his swelling breast
His old heart's fervor was expressed :

“ This wonderous information won

“ Gives thee a sire—I lose a son :

“ For since thy youthful front my sight

“ First greeted with a strange delight,

“ I had resolved that thou should'st be

“ Child of my age's misery ;

“ And Opoleyt should find in thee

“ A chief deserving realty.

“ But now approaching wars invite

“ Thy valor to the chancing fight.

“ Alas ! we ne'er had known this strife

“ If murdered Mirza were in life.”—

The stranger's eye a wild delight

Caught instantly; he shunned the sight

Of the observant lords : a smile

Of kindling hope, long damped, the while

Shone on his pregnant countenance.

“ Why broke that animated glance

“ From him ? What heeded he if dead

“ Mirza were laid in lowly bed ?

“ Could devotee exult, that war

“ Inspired her brazen trump afar ?

“ Head of my sire ! no poor faquir

“ Is this : doubt not, 'twill soon appear

“ That arm of his is fitter far

“ To wield the cimeter of war ;

" Gifted with faithful Syriac brand,⁷
" Firm clenched within a vet'ran's hand,
" To scatter death and misery,
" Than count yon wretched rosary."

XLII.

For each had that ascetic pressed
With scanning eye, and each confessed
A baffled scrutiny; yet doubt
Was still that whole Durbar⁸ about.
Retired he had, then Abbajee
Began his tale of misery.

" What hideous end, what thought malign,
" Can urge the Moslem's dark design?
" Or why, within Camballia's walls,
" In maiden state he still inthralls
" A father's joy, an only child,
" I may not think. Since not defiled,
" Nor importuned with passion's voice,
" He woos her to forsake her choice.
" It can't be love; his nature feels
" A cold contempt for love's appeals;
" But Mahadev bears our last demand;
" What word the chieftain may remand
" Await we here: Mahadev possessed
" Of keen discourse, may win him best;
" For though advanced in mellow years,
" Nathless, a soldier's zeal he bears;
" And though some secret thought disturb
" His vacant hours, and e'er perturb

“ His nightly slumbers ; yet I ween
“ Herein his virtue shall be seen ;
“ And virtue’s voice Abdullah bend
“ To seek again an ancient friend—”
A flourish calls of trump and drums !
It must, it must be Mahadev comes !
The distant aisles return a sound,
Fleet footsteps press the sacred ground.
The steps approach : in sullen mood
The bold Hindu before them stood ;
His pace of speed, the evening’s heat,
Besmeared him o’er with dust and sweat :
A low sala’am⁹ to Abba made,
The missive chief out drew his blade ;
“ This, injured king ! alone must gain
“ What, sought by me, was sought in vain.
“ Yon stern, relentless Moossulmaun,
“ Adjured by prophet and Koran,
“ Resolves on Rajepoot blood to smile,
“ The due punishment of thy guile—
“ (I use the chieftain’s proper phrase).
“ And more he swears, that while his days
“ Shall give him force to wield the brand,
“ It still shall haunt thy guilty land ;
“ That while his heart in life shall be,
“ It still shall beat in hate of thee :
“ And while (for thou hast been the bane
“ Of all his joy, his source of pain),
“ His tongue can still an accent roll,
“ ’T shall damn thy unrelenting soul.”

The Rajah's quivering lip declares
What rising wrath that bosom tears.
" I ween that wily chief still deems,
" Or feigns to think, or idly dreams,
" Myself the murthurer of his son :
" So let him hold !—no ! I am none !
" But rouse—these words I 'gin to rate
" The froward type of causeless hate !"
The Rajah was no more the same,
He struck his wrinkled front in ire ;
His fruitful eye was closed, and fire
Now beamed where endless tears had been ;
But this—this thought provoked his spleen.
He bade the council bare the sword,
" Then War !" he cried, and at the word
To eyes as bright shone every faithful cimeter.
Impetuous to the palace made
His steps : " Come ! follow !" All obeyed.

XLIII.

In haste the whole procession passed,
Mahadev, in pensive pace, the last ;
The strange faquir had known his tone,
Advanced, and leant him near the stone
That lay Gunputhee's shrine before,
And all the sacred offerings bore ;
There needed pass that chief to lay
His own, ere yet he took his way ;
He neared the idol-god, and placed
His offering there.

" This shrine debased

" Is justly held, if guilt shall dare
" With blood-stained hand lay nuzzer there."
A voice remembered once then spoke,
And on that chief like thunder broke—
'Twas—whose? The torches flare, and curse
His sight with hell, or rack it worse.
'Twas very he! 'twas Mahadev's doom
To see this tenant of the tomb.
Collecting strength, he fled; alarm
So urged him of that phantom form;
The temple porch was won: he stood
In breathless awe; his shuddering blood
Waxed cold, and curdled, e'en as thought
Back to his eyes that damned vision brought.

Mahadev awhile we leave to prove
From unknown cause this dread. Above,
Wrath Abba, stung at Moslem pride,
To magazine and foundery hied;
Gave instant order, near and far,
For implement and troops of war.
Though night were nearly spent, yet he
To bastion passed and battery:
Around his towers with martial skill
Observed performed his princely will:
Without the gates of Opoleyt,
With poison drugged the waters¹⁰ sweet,
And every woody canopy
That might avail his enemy
Was burnt or felled; rich fields consumed,
The vicinage a desert loomed,¹¹

The sentries' dull and frequent tone,
Continual round the ramparts lone ;
And challenge swift, and signal word,
Perpetual thro' the night were heard.
The iron-studded gates unbarred
Gave issue to the outer guard ;
Wise caution guided valor's flame :
Just was the cause, the meed was fame.
'Twas thus that Abbajee pronounced
To meet the stroke which hate denounced.
Thus the bold, prescient, sailor from afar
Descries the terrors of the windy war ;
With nautic skill the tempest to disarm,
Furls his broad sails, and braves the rolling storm.

END OF CANTO I.

OPOLEYTA.

CANTO II.



CAMBALLIA.

I.

COMMOTION is the time for great, bad men ;
For bold, heroic vice seems virtue then.
In days of peace the warlike rarely tow'r,
Nor gain that idol which mankind adore,
The universal wish, the golden chains of power.

Well needed Abba every care apply,
To meet his foe's undaunted mastery.
'Tis true, Abdullah was no sceptred slave,
No mongrel courtier, but a soldier brave ;
A man on whom the world had never smiled,
Nor luxury had nursed, nor joys beguiled.
Nay, even Love's, that pleasing tyrant's dart,
Had rarely touched his adamant heart ;
But now—so coldly did its power move,
'Twere e'en profane to call that feeling love.

'Twas so composed that man might well debate,
If more of love were in't, or less of hate.
The issue of his only blest embrace
Was slain in youth, by kindred murderer base :
He too was stained with blood, a brother's blood ;
By him those virtues perish'd in their bud,
That erst had blessed Camballia's towers, and far
Dispelled the clouds of thundercrested war.
Mirza was meekly good : Abdullah's breast
Was e'er on wing, incapable of rest.
He was of those ambitious men, who aim
At the proud eminence of martial fame,
And still aspire the state's affair to guide,
That deed and counsel may go side by side ;
But when the hope of that exalted state
Is lost, who rankle at unworthy fate,
And seize, with greedy spleen, each galling plea
To vex their prince, and canvass each decree
Of dubious sort ; bewail the state's decay
With patriot guise, yet to their evil day
Appear resigned ; and when with specious theme
The hydra's won, mature their own aspiring scheme.

II.

He was of that desponding mood,
When man looks careless on his God ;
Since dead that son, on whom his heart reclined,
No joy knew he, but sullenness of mind
Preyed on him e'er ; bereft of all delight,
A solemn, stern, unfriended eremite.

And oft in hours of shade, at silent eve,
For baffled hopes of happiness he'd grieve;
Not in remorse—but that his bloody deed
Had not been crowned with its attended meed.
On guilt unmoved he looked: compunctious awe
Of conscious sin ne'er forced its potent law
In that bold breast; for long had he resigned
The love and fear of heaven to the wind;
Repented not, nor counted with dismay,
The days of his salvation lost for aye.
For how could he atone that villain fact,
A brother's murder, that self-damning act?
Would heaven receive a blood-stained craven's prayer?
He knew the worst—then wherefore live in fear?
The prophet cursed the slave of coward mind,
He'd leave at least a soldier's fame behind.

III.

He once possessed a heart that shrunk from guilt,
And shuddered e'en at blood in battle spilt;
Ere vain ambition dulled the nicer sense,
That waits on meek, contented innocence.
Ask ye, what brought a heart of noble flame
To brand renown with fratricide's swarth name?
'Twas broken faith first turned his heart to stone,
Then hatred grew with stern misfortune's frown,
For all the world forsook him; first reviled
His guiltless name with blood—then smote his child—
Then urged to murder! his distempered brain.
Why what had he to love in this wide world of pain?

When first Abdullah at ambition's call
Usurped the order of Camballia's wall,
And answered thus his true, objected crime :
" Abba, these domes I hold for future time,
" Till thou shalt drive me forceful from the sway
" Of walls I've guarded many a bloody day ;
" Since none so well may claim them, know my thought,
" As he that for their safety oft hath fought :
" Nay more—henceforth on equal terms we meet,
" If either chief his martial peer entreat ;
" Rebuke is vain—I heed no despot word ;
" My right?—a daring mind, a yet unconquered sword."
Of old this answer had a chief conveyed,
For whom Abdullah ever had display'd
A mindful love ; and years of recompense
The chief designed to soften one offence :
For once, in headstrong passion's reckless burst,
He smote the Ranjepoot, and his God accursed ;
His temple shrines defiled, and on his cast,
In rating mood, reproachful stigma passed,

IV.

They who the sunny scenes of Ind recall,
Its thousand tribes, its fancies mystical ;
They who in that soft clime have sweetened hours,
With India's sex in ever blooming bowers ;
In heavenly lassitude inhaling bliss,
And cheering love with every burning kiss,
From mouths immortal Moossoolmauns might greet,
With pearls themselves, as mountain roses, sweet.

Oh! they who ever sued for love's last prize,
And weened consent from half-dejected eyes,
Wreathing those jetty locks, and fragrant braids,
That like soft tendrils flaunt on orient maids,
And marked offending will, and modest grace,
Successive flush frail beauty's kindling face:
Remember too, religion's slighted name
Will rouse immediate the vindictive flame;
And softness chased, exasperate the blood,
Fierce as their venom'd snake¹³ expands its hood.
Abdullah deemed the Rajepoot had forgiven
His gods debased, and unavenged heaven;
But—list my tale, and see how zealot ire
In Pagan breasts can kindle pious fire.
Mark how the soul is trammelled, how decayed,
How dulled the mind by superstition's shade.

V.

When first Abdullah's great, capacious soul,
Disdaining rule, impatient of control,
Cast off the servile bonds of fealty,
And dread to seize Camballia's realty;
Mirza, whose loyal mood reproved an act,
He hoped, by guile or awe, to counteract,
Immediate bore Abdullah's darling boy,
His only solace, his unfailing joy,
Conveyed him to the walls of Opoleyt; and there
Awhile consigned him to a faquir's care:
And hoped that that dear hostage would regain
The rebel chief to loyalty again.

But when the Moslem's prince the mandate gave
To yield the fortress, and his son to save,
Abdullah sternly swore to hold his reign :
And for his son—he held such menace vain.
For should he dare his single hair to harm,
Abdullah's nerve, though old, still nerved a father's arm.
How little threats deter when injured pride
O'er cautious counsel rolls its ruffled tide !
'Twas Mahadev bore the Moossoolmaun's contempt
Of Abba's wrath, and dared his power to tempt ;
To tempt that strength which few can nobly use,
But kings, those despot lords, for aye abuse.
To Mirza too the rending tidings bore,
Abdullah's hand had shed Liyalva's gore ;
Bliss of his soul ! in life's expanding bloom ;
To that drear ocean, the mysterious tomb,
Which none have seen, yet all with vain desire
Depict as woe, and doubtful hope inspire,
Was she foredoomed : those shades that save
Our woes, the dark, Lethæan, grateful grave.
Mahadev returned, but not his chief to greet
With joyous words ; performed the savage threat
Himself had seen. Ay ! Mirza smiled to see
The brand of justice act his own decree.
The boy was slain : nor kindred moved, nor ruth
To spare the tender helplessness of youth.
“ Be his th' atonement then, since his the deed :
“ Hell be his lot ! let that fell Mirza bleed.”
The words were passed, nor set the evening's sun,
Mahadev declared the bloody mandate done.

Three ruffian slaves the brother's life had reft,
And bathed their falchions to the very heft.
At that same fane, where wave the plantains green,
Camballia's towers and Opoleyt between,
The brother died : achieved the deed of blood,
The chieftain fell before the temple god ;
Yet well availed him his repugnant hand,
Twain cravens dropt beneath his well-plied brand.

VI.

Full sixteen years were spent in languid war
Since Mirza felt th' assassin's cimeter ;
Full sixteen years since Opoleyt decreed
Abdullah's offspring should atone, and bleed ;
And sixteen years were fled since Mahadev's rest
Was banished from his dark, unhallowed breast.
Guilt rarely binds nefarious hearts in one ;
Its promised store, the race but just begun
May knit awhile ; mistrust succeeds to sin,
And each doubts each to be what both have been.
Suspicion pauses—memory perturbs,
The conscious fellow of thy deed disturbs.
Not blest art thou with others to transgress,
The damning proofs of thine unworthiness ;
The very scenes which innocence hath loved
Hath guilt deformed, their charms are all removed.
Oh ! happier far to roam the alien wild,
Than tread that home thy villany defiled.

Within the walls of Opoleyt withdrew
To banish memory, the dark Hindu.

Vain hope! to blot what her firm hand hath strook,
Hath writ in her tenacious, faithful book :
Yes—her imperishable records tell
The truth. To sin—her treasured scenes are hell ;
To virtue, woe—a mingled tear—no more ;
Sighs still attend her melancholy store.
The sterner Moslem lived : cast not away
Remorse to sin, to peril no dismay.
Firm, in his bands confiding, though but few,
(He well had tried them, oft had proved them true) ;
Revenge with unsuccumbing patience sought,
Night's latest throe, the first that morning brought.
And when out-numb'ring hosts would oft oppose,
He lulled to heedlessness unwary foes ;
Knew when to strike, and then so strongly smote,
That veterans wondered at the deeds he wrought ;
In ill success undaunted, calm, and great,
And still redoubted even in defeat,
He was for soldiers born : he seemed combined
To gain and rule the rugged soldier's mind ;
Lord of his host, not thence from hardship free ;
If scant their fare, that scanty fare had he.
Were brooks their drink ? the same he drank. To those
The ground a bed ? the earth gave him repose.
Untented they ? that proper chief would lie
Himself beneath blue heaven's high canopy.
He walked in mystery, because he saw
On vulgar minds that it imposes awe.
Though cautious, yet his bands could never see
The pausing mood which chills their energy ;

If danger reared its front, he led them on,
In every bold emprise the foremost one :
Warmed their aspiring hearts with love of fame,
That self-sustaining fire, a martial flame ;
With lowliest bands the equal perils shared,
And never shrunk, though ruin's self appeared ;
Resolved to live invariably great,
Or perish, princelike, with his conquered state.

VII.

Sagoona now, within the hostile gates,
The stern, vindictive Moslem's ire awaits ;
With anxious doubt, and ear applied to ground,
And breath repressed, she chilled at every sound
That toward her cell in secret movement crept ;
Now loosed her ebon locks,¹⁴ and softly wept,
As on one dear memorial she gazed ;
And oft, in hope, her eyes to heaven she raised.
Yes, that bright gem that bade her woes arise,
And flow those rival chrystals from her eyes,
A father whilom gave her aye to wear,
And bind the fragrant tresses of her hair ;
That pledge to save, when he could hope to be
Remembered, but in her felicity.
But he, perhaps, renounced his daughter fled,
Condemned her fugitive, or deemed her dead ;
Or doubtful held his anxious search in vain,
Unconscious of a daughter's captive chain.
Distress made each affection doubly dear,
And brighter scenes of happier time's career

Recalled ; but blacked this dismal sea,
And dulled the prospects of futurity.

Voluptuous ye ! born in the lap of ease,
Whose languid sense invention toils to please ;
So are your hours of peril and dismay
Made dark by memory of happier day ;
Then friends remote are misery and care,
And love is horror—distance is despair.
When tossed on ocean's troubled sea ye roam,
How oft ye cast a cowering look to home !
What ! if thou cleavest Cathayan floods afar,¹⁵
That rave and jangle in eternal war ;
Or hear the dreary wilderness of waves
Repine, and murmur o'er its myriad graves :
How the sweet hours, incredibly divine,
Of love and halcyon ease that once were thine,
Opposed to such appalling grandeur, roll
Despair and darkness o'er thy sinking soul.

But he, the utter stranger to delight,
Whose brightest hour of joy was never bright,
Beholds, unmoved, surrounding dangers shed
Their wildest gloom on his devoted head.
No bliss to greet him—he, no friend to mourn ;
Why, what recks he to pass the doubtful bourne ?
Indifferent he the foam-crowned surge can mark,
With stunning tempest smite the giddy bark ;
From liquid vales behold the billow curl,
And bursting mountains wild destruction hurl.
Born but the chilling lore of grief to know,
Oh ! what is death, if life confer but woe ?

VIII.

Abdullah, wrapt in horrible delight,
In vengeful thought spent all that sleepless night;
The third day's eve the bright green flag shall fly,
His host encamped before the enemy:
His martial band increased from hour to hour,
And warlike wanderers swelled the Moslem power.
But not to war's precarious chance would he
Defer his purpose of malignity.
Sagoona now was his, and, if he would,
Revenge was his for slaughtered Syed's blood.
Awhile he mused, with head on palm reposed,
On all his stern, vindictive heart proposed:
Recalled his injuries, and gave assent
To deeds beyond damnation's punishment.
He rose with folded arms—on earth his look—
Advanced—and paused—and yet a pace he took—
Beat on the ground his foot—looked to and fro—
Drew his deep breath—and cried “It shall be so!”

IX.

Abdullah passed; but chillness on him fell
As near he drew that virgin's dungeon cell;
His mighty arm removed the bar and chain
That bound the captive in her drear domain.
The door half-oped; he faltered—listened—heard—
No, none were near—but loneliness deterred;
The midnight breeze, by fits that died and grew,
Seemed to deplore the deed about to do.
No, none were there to awe him: all alone
In sleep the maid oppressed the death-cold stone

Stole some few hours from sorrow and distress,
A short, though sweet release from wretchedness.
Fixed in the horrid purpose to destroy,
What dark atrocities that mind employ !
And shall revenge debase that martial hand,
With woman's blood to stain the battle brand?
Yea, all's resolved: the shame be what it will,
Abdullah swears revenge, and stoops to kill.
He ne'er had seen her—no ; this fated night
The first he saw her. The expiring light
That pours from yonder niche a feeble stream,
These trickling walls, his purpose dark beseeem,
The emblems these of misery and death.
He lays his hand on baldric and on sheath;
Would not disturb her dreams, for doubtful fear
Of tender orison, or soothing prayer.
The blow once struck without reflection—good !
But thought is hostile to such deeds of blood.
The steel was bare, and near the Painim drew,
With eyes averse, that slumbering, sweet Hindu.
His arm exalted, snatched one instant glance
To guide the wound; her angel countenance
Suspends him there, irresolutely mad;
Willing, yet shrinking from a deed so bad—
In dreadful fluctuation tossed, inclined
His heart to mercy, to revenge his mind.
With blade uplifted—motionless—aghast,
Creation's loveliest, purest flower to blast.
Sagoona's head lies o'er her shackled arm,
Where rugged manacles displace the charm ;¹⁵

And in their iron gripe those limbs confine,
Which seem too tender e'en for flowers to twine.
That pale, transparent robe that o'er her throws
Folds pure and white as Himolaya's snows,¹⁷
Reveals a form of lineaments so fair,
That one might vow Parvati slumbers there.
So bland that front, it speaks of all within,
There lives no sullen portraiture of sin :
That placid brow, and those long lashes throw
A feeble shadow o'er the streams of woe,
Which, chrystallizing in their tearful streak,
Now glisten on her pale and sorrowed cheek.
Her black, bright ringlets round her bosom flow,
Waved by the breath of every heaving thro';
Exhaling fragrance from her lips of rose,
Sweet as the breeze from Irem's¹⁸ bower that blows ;
There reigns an awful beauty o'er the whole,
A feminine serenity of soul——
Recall those nights in equinoctial seas,
When scarce a wave is heard, or felt a breeze ;
When the moon, gliding through her cloudless steep,
Sheds a pale lustre on the twinkling deep ;
Ocean slow heaving, and the winds at rest——
So softly swelled, and sighed Sagoona's breast.

X.

His giant form the Moslem o'er her bent,
And wondered what his inward weakness meant :
He saw her sleeping, would—but could not smite,
His potent arm disowned its wonted might.

Sagoona moved: her clanking fetters dart
Forgotten feelings to his lion heart.
How! did he quail to meet the waking eye
Of her he doomed to quick eternity?
Could helpless innocence appal that mood,
That mind so long familiarized with blood?
Oh! there's a potent principle within,
That doth not banish, yet denounces sin.
E'en thus primæval Adam sought to fly
The wrathful glance of the Almighty eye,
Which saw creation's Paradise so fair,
Renounced, abandoned, at a woman's prayer.
Dear sinner! man's seducer ere his fall,
We hail thee now—our happiness,—our all.
The Moslem strove with nature—vain endeavour!
Shed a true tear, and faltered "Never! never!"
Dropt from his guilty grasp the clattering brand,
And fled that scene, astounded and unmanned.
Up rose Sagoona, startling at the sound,
Her timid eyes cast fearfully around:
The dungeon wicket oped! a sabre there!
Then life's last ebb—destruction's arm was near.
Warmth on its grasp that cimetar retained,
And purpose fell and horrible explained.
The maiden knelt, with eyes to heaven upcast,
And called on Vishnu¹⁹ in that hour—her last.
Resentment lived not in her, but were there
A resignation meek, a world of prayer;
There anguish held its sorrowful abode,
With deathless hope, and confidence in God.

XI.

In all the horrors that accusing thought,
And baffled purpose, in Abdullah wrought,
He gained that couch where still 'twas his to wear
Uneasy hours, and nights of sleepless care;
But still to ponder o'er a guilty past,
And sternly brood o'er that terrific waste—
Dun clime of streamless sands, and scorching sky,
Eternal state of guilt's futurity.²⁰
He sought repose, but not repose was there;
He paced his halls; then breathed the evening air:
Passed by the portal guard, that marked, with awe,
Unusual care their thoughtful chieftain gnaw.
Abdullah points his hand—they ope the gate,
“I walk awhile, my coming soon await.”
The jarring bars, and clanking chains, aloud
Hurl their dull echo thro' the arches proud.
The rankling Painim to a wood withdrew,
That through night's calm its sylvan odors threw;
A limpid streamlet, 'neath the moonlight ray,
In plaintive murmurs held its glimmering way;
Its banks bestrown with palms, that now repose,
For zephyr's wing might scarcely wave the rose,
Or waft an odor o'er the gentle tide,
From flowrets pale that dight its sloping side.
The groaning cocoas, idly to and fro,
Wave gently as the streams that glide below;
And if a fragrant breath of air be given
Benignly from the airy sprites of heaven,
Hark! from the mournful conch, or vesper chime,
Flow the dull records of predestined time;

Enhancing in these awful hours of gloom
The solemn melancholy of the tomb.
Far o'er the wide expanse of watery mees,²¹
The ling'ring knoll still floats upon the breeze;
Makes lovelier with its dole this silent glade,
And solitude more exquisitely sad.
Guilt here might shed its penitential tear,
But virtuous souls would feel exalted here :
Here each dear memory in the holy breast,
In solemn woe might find a pleasing rest.
Scenes such as these unfriended friends have sought,
Absorbed in swelling, melancholy thought ;
Here life's neglected pilgrim would delay
His hard career, and sigh his cares away ;
Here weep in patient, unavailing tears,
For ever past, the bliss of early years.
Days of my youth ! how oft on Indian streams
Have shades like these induced my wayward dreams.
Ah ! happy times ! irremeably sweet
As the bright lymphs that rippled at my feet.

XII.

Oh ! how unlike these shades' celestial peace,
The storms that rive the heart of wickedness !
Prevailing Conscience ! Pleasure's gayest hour
Quells not thy stern and thought-compelling pow'r ;
But when, removed from the disturbing world,
Life's ample chart is faithfully unfurled ;
When vicious monarchs hear no minion's voice,
Dispelling thought, and bidding guilt rejoice ;

When they observe impartial nature's boon
Is bliss to all, and not to them alone ;
See cloudless skies, and heaven's bright stars reveal
One common light, one universal weal,
Mark the still waters glide in peace away,
Nor heed the frantic fool that bids them stay,
Despite the tale of parasites and slaves,
The tyrants' bane, those base, obsequious knaves ;
These are the hours which teach such men to know,
That virtue only genders joy below :
Go—seek some solitude, reflect, and scan ;
The better being is the happier man.

Abdullah's form beside the stream was laid,
And all was peace within that slumbering glade ;
There, as he sought to quell the hectic flame
That scorched his mind, and coursed his mighty frame,
The dark reflections of the past arose,
On his stern mind their torture to impose ;
The pageantries of state remote, now pride
Began delusion's victim to deride.

“ Yes, all is vain : what happiness is mine,

“ O'er armed hosts pre-eminent to shine,

“ Yet mark in every eye that shuns my frown,

“ Felicity far greater than mine own ?

“ To know, the veriest slave who wields the brand

“ In battle field, and rears his warrior hand,

“ Undaunted dares on carnaged plains to die,

“ As brave—as great—more virtuous than I.”

Virtue by turns and vice his breast assailed,

One other ebb, and heaven had prevailed.

“ Ullah Kureem ! ” the golden dreams of youth,
“ Ambition’s mockery and bright untruth,
“ Conspired my better argument to blind,
“ And leave me now the friendless of mankind.
“ Yes, I remember well that all conceived
“ Me great, and I their presages believed ;
“ That I disdained a fellow in my sphere,
“ My soul aspired, and never quailed with fear ;
“ Mine was the arm in perils to relieve,
“ The first to front them, and the last to leave.
“ But now—redoubted, still I wield the rod,
“ And for my hour I reign the people’s god :
“ With needless blood ne’er stained my wanton steel,
“ For they who felt its edge had dared to feel ;
“ Ambition’s steps, irrevocably stern,
“ Admit no pause, no penitent return.
“ What ! had I quailed when scruples bade me stay,
“ And trifled greatness and command away,
“ Who then had said that virtue held my hand ?
“ Some bolder villain had secured my band,
“ And I, desertless of my dauntless host,
“ The guilty craven had displayed at most.
“ But I contemned the phantoms of remorse,
“ And force was mine, and I directed force ;
“ Curst with aspiring energies of soul,
“ To court no middle glory, but the whole ;
“ I bore dominion, and I dared to kill
“ Opposing slaves—the future what it will.
“ Had conscience checked me midway in my guilt,
“ My gore had paid what old ambition spilt :

“ Abdullah ne’er shall bear the world’s rebuke,
“ A slave unworthy of the power he took ;
“ But ever constant to my bold emprise,
“ Detest they may, but never shall despise.”

XIII.

Thus as the Painim mused, reclined on ground,
His ear received some distant footstep’s sound ;
With hand on earth his body’s weight to raise,
And ear directed to the woodland maze,
He paused to mark—again that tread was heard ;
Abdullah rose, and loudly cried “ The word ! ”
No answer came, but crashing boughs declare
The forest beast, or secret foeman near ;
His brand he seized, and gazing through the screen
Of crackling shrubs, and trellis creepers green,
A form of human mould espied, endued
With falchion fair, and studded target good.
“ Who comes ? ”

“ A friend.”

“ And whence? ho ! stand.”

“ Whence recks not thee ; I seek Camballia’s band.”

“ That verdant turban speaks thy lofty line.

“ Ber to sulamut !²³ if I well divine,

“ From sacred Ali is thy proud descent :

“ Resolve me, Syed²⁴—whither art thou bent ?

“ Camballia’s gates at sunset ever close,

“ And her broad moat around its barrier throws ;

“ No access now her portals will afford,

“ The morrow’s morn will see that power restored.

"Nay, pass not on, nor grasp thy shining steel,

"I too possess that self-same hard appeal."

"I know you not, nor care my steps to stay

"In converse harsh, or enter on affray.

"I heed thee not: remonstrancer, give room,

"Nor tempt me, desperate, on thy luckless doom.

"No warrior awes me while I bear my brand,

"Unwonted I to yield when slaves command.

"Obtrusive man, to yon proud arch I hie;

"This night I reach it, or attempting die."

"Desist, vain youth, my firm resolvé to move,

"You pass not, unopposed, this guarded grove.

"Thou know'st me not! 'Tis true, or else thy tongue

"Had died in silence ere its words it flung:

"Not thine, presuming stranger, to enlarge

"Thy haughty tone—despite that knotted targe;

"I scorn the odds which now thou seem'st to bear,

"Yet more disdain the heart that bends to fear.

"I charge thee stay, nor dare my blood to rouse,

"One further step my glaive must needs oppose."

Rage touched the stranger's soul, his shield

He cast indignant on the verdant field.

"Now, base marauder, tell me, have I shown

"A heart as brave and dauntless as thine own?

"No odds seek I to meet my fellow's ire,

"Yet tell thee still, no contest I desire:

"But, midnight prowler, urge me not too far,

"I hate vain blood as I rejoice in war."

XIV.

Abdullah sneered unspeakable disdain,
Forced a grim laugh, and measured o'er the man.
"What specious, smooth-tongued caitiff meet I here,
"That chills with fright, yet would impart his fear?
"Whence can so bold, so fierce a Moslem come,
"To daunt old warriors, and to strike them dumb?
"Thy former lord, perhaps, awaits the day
"Of some approaching and destructive fray,
"And thou hast fled to save thy polished glaive,
"A dastard pandar, or deserting slave."

Swift as the lightning flash that rives the pole
The stranger's blade sprung forth; and from his soul,
With all the bitterness of taunted pride,
He told Abdullah to his teeth—he lied!
Abdullah started, wondering, not in fear,
Cast a keen eye, and fixed his green duster.
The combat quicken'd, clash to clash replied,
And skill and courage shone on either side;
Now clang their swords, bright fires the vivid steel,
They close, recede, precipitate, and wheel.
Each, as he viewed, with death-denouncing look,
His bold antagonist, with fury shook.
Awhile they pause—their eyes such lustre wave
As fires fierce beaming from a murky cave:
Abdullah's stroke possessed the nicer truth,
The stranger's hand the vigorous nerve of youth.
They urge, recoil, impel, desist, respire;
Glance rivets glance, observed each dumb desire.
His soul now centering in his arm, at length
The stranger smote with more than mortal strength,

Beat down the Moslem's cimeter, and stood
Above his foe, like monster of the wood,
Whose sated jaws, too indolent to slay,
In dubious clemency yawn o'er the prey.
" Rise!" cried the youth, as with a haughty frown
He cast the Moslem's captive anlace down :
" Yes, life be thine; remember him who gave,
" A dastard pandar, a deserting slave!"

XV.

Abdullah's haughty dignity disdained
To take the abject boon which now remained;
His eyes upcast displayed that hateful thought,
Security with degradation bought.
" No, dauntless youth, thy falchion's point impart
" To the red sources of a wounded heart;
" Before thee lies, whom once mankind revered,
" The mighty courted, and the wicked feared.
" Oh! times long passed, despair and shame remain,
" Rack my high mind, and hold my soul's domain.
" Strike then, conjured by me, my fleeting breath
" Will hover careless on the gales of death."
Touched at that grand indifference to fate
Which cowering earthlings dare not, cannot rate,
The youthful stranger, with emotion, came,
And raised with reverence that aged frame;
In terms of generous, sympathetic grief,
Assuaged the aged, agonizing chief.
" Illustrious foe," the Painim then replied,
" Far sooner I in this affray had died,

“Than owe to human mercy what I hate,
“An hour’s suspension of protracted fate :
“Trust me, I had not held this toilsome boon
“From abject foeman, no ! but had as soon
“Dug to my heart’s recess this dagger’s hilt,
“And smiled in pleasure on the blood it spilt ;
“But thou, great stranger, hast my mind subdued,
“And this wild heart with distant hope imbued.
“Yes, if there be on this unfriendly earth
“Such sovereign souls, and such majestic worth,
“Why life is well—But hold ! the gift I use
“Avails me not, if still thou should’st refuse
“To let me quit, through night’s concealing shade,
“The guarded precincts of this woodland glade ;
“And thou must rest until Camballia’s horn
“Announce free entrance on the break of morn ;
“Moreover swear, that aye thy mind shall keep
“These deeds of darkness in eternal sleep.”

“Each boon be granted : when the early sun
“Shall his fierce course from yonder mountains run,
“I seek Camballia’s tow’rs.” The Painim took
His way transverse the pebble-bedded brook ;
Wound through the mazes of the sylvan brake—
Was gone. Now morning’s dim and orient flake
Hung idly o’er the distant hills of blue ;
And misty clouds of swift receding dew,
In fleeting volumes o’er the freshened meads,
Proclaim’d that Carmasacshi’s²⁵ anxious steeds
Were yoked ; the gorgeous east refulgent shone,
As the glad god the mountain summits won ;

Melodious symphonies the woodlands ring,
And his bright renovated glory sing :
Fresh were the airs that o'er the champaign blew,
And shook night's sorrow from the flowret's hue ;
Revealed, before the god's resplendent car,
Camballia's yellow battlements afar,
Bold bastions, parapets, and turrets high,
And long green streamers fluttering to the sky,
Extended shone ; and from its highest tower
The ensign waved, and burst the cannon roar,
The brazen trumpet sounded martial glee,
The draw-bridge fell, Camballia's gates were free.

END OF CANTO II.

OPOLEYTA.

CANTO III.



I.

HOPE leads us anxious on from hour to hour,
Her bright green prospects still afar displays,
In life's severity reveals her power,
When sweet imagination round her plays,
The flattering promise of more halcyon days.
Can Hope e'er vanish? Oh! she waves us on,
And dries our tears with consolation's rays,
E'en when the world's vain cares are nearly done,
Hope sweetly beams as when our years of love begun.

II.

But if there be a time when Hope expires,
And fell Despair her cold, dull, vapour throws
O'er Hope's celestial, animating fires,
'Tis when a lover's desolation flows
From the dear idol who neglects his woes:
Here fancy may not gild the distant year,
Nor round futurity her joys dispose;

But rumination aye the heart must wear,
And melancholy dole, Cimmerian despair.

III.

Within Camballia's turrets high
Two mutual hearts sincerely sigh ;
Yet hope's sweet solaces they prove,
To mitigate the throes of love.
Oh ! what is Love ? An anxious tide,
Dispensing rills on every side,
Yet rolling, continually strong,
One deep continued course along :
Its early stream meand'ring ever,
Its lively current failing never ;
Obstructed now by closing mounds,
Now rushing o'er its flowery bounds ;
And wand'ring till itself be spent,
Obedient to its wayward bent.
Like Hybla's bee, here wastes an hour,
First sips the sweet, then flees the flow'r ;
Awhile, in search of fresh delight,
It ranges where the blooms invite ;
It knows not rest, from peace it flies,
In wild illusion wastes, and dies.
Oh ! life, thy hours for love are few,
And he that e'er love's blessing knew,
Though fortune frown upon his day,
Would hardly cast thy cares away ;
'Tis love alone, that to thy woes
Our weary being can compose ;

For love we live, we die for love,
And dying hail its joys above.
Yea! if there be a heaven on high,
A state of immortality,
A home exempt from worldly care,
There genial hearts shall blend for ever,
And lovers true be parted never:
And love—angelic love be there.

IV.

All other feelings leave the heart,
Ere pure affection doth depart;
Ambition's projects fleet away,
As youth's credulities decay:
Wild mirth and revelry recede,
As sober thought, and years proceed,
And old companions slumber with the dead.
E'en when the friend we loved from birth,
Hath laid his mouldered form in earth,
Then love may minister relief,
And wave, at least, its rainbow o'er our grief.
That passion soothed my boyhood's tears,
Half staunch'd the woe of early years;
When friendless—fatherless—alone,
I sought the realms of Asia's sun;
And sadly pausing o'er my doom,
Oft mused, in melancholy gloom,
On floods that bore me from my home:
As wont at even to repine,
Yet think what happiness were mine,



If those self waves that passed me by,
Should meet Matilda's pensive eye.

V.

The stranger bears the sword and shield,
For him he quelled on equal field,
Unconscious of the mighty foe
Who sunk beneath his falchion's blow;
Nor deemed his uncorrupted sense,
That clemency could cast offence:
Yet had he weened the worst of all,
He had not stayed at peril's call;
In love's omnipotence he strove,
And dangers—there are none to love.
There's not a task imposed on man
Our hearts are so unapt to span,
To love the ruth by which we live,
And learn our own forgivers to forgive.
For obligation o'er the soul
Throws hard dependence and control;
And our hearts swelling to be free,
Disdain that stern indignity.

Abdullah rankled at the fight,
The living shame of yesternight;
Thanks to the shade of that lone hour,
And the deep foliage of the bower,
The chieftain's front, and guise concealed,
At most imperfectly revealed,
Might baffle recollection's eye,
And keenest scrutiny defy.

VI.

Sheikh Hyder²⁶ to Abdullah came,
With naked feet, and low salaam :
“ One youth, who joins our martial band,
“ Protests himself of Persic land ;
“ Yet round him a mysterious air
“ Denies the fact his words declare.
“ The fair complexion of Irān,
“ The stately port of Farsistān,
“ Indeed, he bears—his sullenness
“ Belies his tale of lowliness.
“ He deigns no answer—deeply sighs,
“ And contemplation stays his eyes :
“ I hold some dark and secret deed
“ This doubtful youth must hither lead.
“ ’Twere well my chieftain’s self should see
“ This piece of proud obscurity.”
Instant Abdullah’s mind foretold
This sullen wight, the stranger bold,
Whose magnanimity could be
Surpassed but by his clemency.
The Moslem’s heart was truly brave—
Opposing foes *he* oft forgave;
But pride had so within him grown,
Himself—he spurned at mercy shown.
The stranger came : Abdullah’s blood
Rushed to his heart in rebel flood ;
Rolled from his fiery speaking eye
The pangs of sharp indignity.

The stranger's mien was nobly thrown,
A brow that had beseeemed a crown;
An eye to all great feelings true,
A cheek of meditation's hue;
His fresh vermilion lip, forsooth,
But shaded with the down of youth;
In graceful negligence abound
Black, shining locks his neck around.
The turban, o'er his temples rolled,
Was knotted by a moon of gold;
Its tint as fresh a verdure yields,
As reigns o'er Yemen's happy fields.
The niveous angreka he wore,
And o'er his lofty shoulder bore,
Of roseate hue, the palampore.
Around his leg of naked strength
The buskin cast its midway length;
Damasco's steel, in idle pride,
Was swinging at his martial side;
His waist was bound by baldric fair,
The better hand upheld a spear;
The left sustained, with brazen rows,
The targe of the rhinoceros.

VII.

The Painim writhed his lip in scorn—
“ Methinks, fair boy, thou wast not born
“ In hardship's school to purchase fame,
“ Or gain in battle-fields a name:

" I deem the gentle form, forsooth,
" Of such a sleek, and pretty youth,
" Were fitter far for haram guard,
" With verdant lattice grating barred,
" Than on the plains of war t' expose
" That beardless face, those lips of rose.
" From Persian land 'tis said you come
" To seek, in feuds, a wealthier doom;
" But here thy floating locks to lave,
" Goolāb nor ittur sweet we have;
" Nor time we yield for sweetest lay,
" To sing the charms of Mosellay.²⁷
" 'Twere sad that on thy simple brow
" A hurtful sabre's mark should glow,
" Or that a hand so fair in hue,
" By toil a deeper tint should rue."—

 The youth perceived this irony,
 Remarked the Moslem's scornful eye,
 And cast him back a glance as high.
" The hand thou deemest of dye so good,
" Was ne'er imbrued in harmless blood;
" But still thou'lt find a heart I bear
" Devoid of guilt, and strange to fear.
" This brow's simplicity, I trow,
" Will still retain its simple glow;
" Nor would I change its peaceful mood
" For one revealing deeds of blood;
" It shames not me my youthful stage,
" 'Tis happier far than guilty age:

“ And for my gentle form, so bland,
“ Your daring purpose but command,
“ Thou’lt own I enter battle’s din
“ Undauntedly, since free from sin.”

VIII.

The stedfast gaze of that young eye
Appalled the chief’s audacity;
Nor less the words he sternly used
Their keen severity diffused.
Abdullah’s strong emotions shewed
What pangs to hidden guilt he owed;
And happier far had been that chief,
If death had brought its last relief,
Than thus to live in doubt, and fear
Detection’s low, malicious sneer.
The Moslem’s faltering tongue resumed:
“ Whence those exalted terms assumed,
“ By one of thine inferior state,
“ Perplexes all; at length relate,
“ And boldly speak, mysterious man,
“ From whence thy pilgrimage began;
“ Thy fortunes, birth, religion, shew,
“ And powder what to truth you owe.”—
“ Chieftain, my martial mind contemns
“ The falsehood which thy law condemns;
“ I seek not lies for my defence,
“ Armed with the shield of innocence:
“ I came not here a *tale* to tell,
“ With vain report my name to swell;

“ Enough for thee to know, I bear
“ In thy defence the sword and spear.
“ My pilgrim feet have strayed afar
“ In various lands, and courted war;
“ The level meads of Teflis knew
“ That in her feuds the blade I drew ;
“ I’ve often heard the war horse tramp
“ Of Persic field, and Indian camp ;
“ I’ve roved the garden of Cashmir ;²⁸
“ And dealt my blows for Champanir,
“ Where Guzeraut’s prolific earth
“ To nature yields abundant birth ;
“ The Babylonian wreck I’ve seen,
“ And borne my toils in Yemen green ;
“ Have felt the winds of heaven sweep
“ The dangerous Erythræan²⁹ deep ;
“ And round Carmeena’s rocks heard rave
“ The howling Caspian’s ruffled wave.
“ Of this enough—the faith I boast
“ Brings no disgrace upon thy host ;
“ My prayers are sped to that abode
“ Where reigns the universal God.
“ Internal precepts teach my heart
“ To act a true and virtuous part :
“ I love my friend, I fight my foe,
“ Yet to the vanquished mercy show ;
“ On no religion cast my sneer,
“ In alien faiths ne’er interfere ;
“ My youth toils little to explore
“ The subtle creeds of pious lore ;

"To Mecca's shrine I neither bend,
 "Nor turn the holy tomes of Zend."³⁰

IX.

Abdullah to Sheikh Hyder drew,
 Before his face the mantle threw;
 Lowly he spake: the brow, the eye
 Imparted more—" * * * * *
 " * * * * *
 " * * * * * and if she die—
 "At midnight * * * * *
 " * * * * * ay, myself will go
 "The deed to view—'twere better so."

The stranger marked the meaning look,
 The thought that on Abdullah broke,
 And on his traitor face could read
 The germ of some atrocious deed.
 The Moslem to the stranger turned;
 His brow was dark, his eye concerned:
 "Sheikh Hyder leads thee to thy care,
 "The charge is high, thy faith beware;
 "At hour of night thy arm prepare,
 "In secret deed the sword to bear.
 "Sheikh Hyder brings, in season due,
 "A scroll that bids thee what to do."

They went: his eye the Painim bent
 Keen on the stranger as he went,
 And seemed to wish Camballia's host
 Had that mysterious creature lost:
 He liked him not—yet knew not why—
 His dauntless front, and noble eye,

Haply recalled what he had been,
Ere yet the slave of vice and sin.

X.

The pondering youth Sheikh Hyder led
To where the sun, in western red,
Full on the iron wicket fell,
That closed Sagoona's dismal cell.
That was his charge: when day should flee
The scroll he'd bring, and dungeon key.—

Divining what mysterious fact
The Moslem chief designed to act;
What captive wight that prison barred,
The stranger, musing, paced his guard.
Haply the maid himself adored,¹
In such oppressive thralldom poured,
Unheeded and unheard, her grief
Denied e'en sympathy's relief.
Sagoona, from her grating bar,
Mused on the slumbering wave below,
Or sunshine battlements afar,
That flanked the towers in lines of war,
All glorious in their evening glow.
The standard drooped—the breeze was gone;
If on the moat she cast her eye,
It idly basked in western sun:
The weed, that all the livelong day
Had held its sweeping course away,
In dormant, steady flakes did lie.
The Moslem's malice had refined
On torture to distract her mind—

The towers of Opoleyta reared,
Far in the scene that now appeared,
Those turrets, that surrounded all
Her soul adored within their wall.
Still would her tear-dimmed vision gaze
On that blest home of happier days ;
And ere the sun of heaven had waned,
Her eyes still bent on Opoleyt,
In pensive tones she thus complained,
And gave the eve her descant sweet.

SONG.

" Ah! long may thy spires in such lustre be given,
" Ah! long may thy ruler reign o'er thy domain ;
" Tho' Sagoona's hard fate, from thy home to be riven,
" Be a father's and lover's despair to complain!"
Here died awhile the lone lament,
Her tears remembered bliss bedewed ;
Some deep-drawn sighs to hope she sent,
Again the sad, wild plaint renewed.

SONG RESUMED.

" The gentle brooks that lave thy walls,
" The shade that round thy temple falls,
" The blushing flag that streams on high,
" The symbol of divinity,
" Recall more halcyon times of yore ;
" Yet never more, his child to bless,
" Shall Abba breathe a fond caress ;
" Nor more on me shall Appajee
" His looks of lovely tenderness
" Reveal; oh, never more!"

XI.

The stranger felt such ecstasy
From that wild, plaintive harmony,
As care-worn men are wont to find,
When comfortless among mankind,
They haply meet, on distant shores,
The friend whom memory adores ;
Or, after long estrangement, see
The cliffs of their nativity.
The stranger paced his sentry ground,
And all was dark and still around ;
The sounds which from that cell were given,
Recalled a voice and thoughts of heaven ;
Yet fortune could not thus impart
The dearest wish that warmed his heart—
Were those sweet strains that warbled kind,
Illusions of his anxious mind ?
Or did the tuneful Gopia raise
With Krishen their celestial lays ?
As through the fields of ether blue,
Now glittering with descending dew,
They sailed sublime to Mutra's plain,³¹
The fields of youthful love's domain ?

XII.

The hour was come: Sheikh Hyder brought
The scroll and key; his brow was fraught
With conscious shame of some foul work ;
Mistrust within him seemed to lurk,
As briefly thus the youth he told,
“ The scroll thy mandate will unfold.”

And as he gave it to his hand,
The youth suspiciously he scanned.
The chief was gone, and all was still,
Save when the distant sentinel,
In hollow challenge, hailed the sound
Of lone night breeze that sighed around.
Panting, the youth the key applied—
Laid bar and massive chain aside;
A moment listened—all was well;
Entered—yet holding breath to hear
If watchful officer were near :
Slowly he turned him round to view
What captive here his durance drew—
Amazed—incapable—he stared—
Sagoona's fettered form appeared;
Nor she her ravished eyes could free
From wildered gaze on—Appajee.
Firm fixed in wonder and delight
They stood, mistrustful of their sight;
And both in giddy raptures strove
To give an utterance to love.
They did not dream—'twas true this scene,
Joy lighted either cheering mien;
Each to a lover's bosom flew,
And mingled tears, oh ! how divinely true !—
Emotions pure to lovers given
Are like the sunshine rain of heaven;
The drops that from affection stream
Are gilded by an instant beam;
The rainy fields outspread below,
Are beauteous in their sunny glow ;

And no wild smiles are half so sweet
As falling tears when lovers meet.

XIII.

Two lovers here beneath the sway
Of foeman, in embraces lay;
Discovered—but one moment sped,
They both might mingle with the dead.
Ere yet young Appa's tale was told,
He seized her bonds of iron cold;
And proudly looking toward the dome
That gave the guilty Moslems home,
He raised his glove above his head,
Some burning drops indignant shed,
And sternly shaking in his hand,
With menace mute, his warrior brand,
A more infernal curse implied
Than all the wordiness of pride
Had cast: then, turning tenderly,
Gazed on Sagoona's tearful eye;
But burning at her captive band,
Burst the vile fetter from her hand,
And, with ineffable disdain,
Damned the base craven that had fixed the chain.
In haste he told th' attentive maid
The tale, and combat of the glade;
By what auspicious chance it fell
Himself should be her sentinel.
"I deemed, when from our city's towers
"Thy flight, ascribed to unknown powers,

“ Perplexed conjecture, that the foe,
“ Whose wall around these ramparts throw,
“ To gratify malignant hate
“ Had borne thee into captive state—
“ But hold!” as with a changing look
The Moslem’s scroll he pausing took:
“ Mysterious orders are enrolled
“ Within the paper that I hold.”
He read—and, ghastly pale, unmanned,
Gave the maid’s death-writ to her hand.
Sagoona clasped him in embrace,
Hid on his breast her flooded face ;
Appa around her cast his arms,
Enamoured of her tearful charms,
Which dangerous distress endeared ;
And more sincere their loves appeared
Than if released from all control
They drank the wildest raptures of the soul.
They dwelt within the Moslem’s power ;
For grief’s indulgence this no hour :
Empassioned Appa on her breast
A kiss of tenderness impressed—
“ Sagoona, hence! thy threatened fate
“ To shun hereafter ’twere too late.
“ Within this hour, the gates unbarred,
“ Give egress to the forest guard—
“ Resolved to know thy certain lot,
“ All thoughts of safety I forgot:
“ Yet rests there in a temple near,
“ Of martial guise, a sage faquīr,

" To whose protecting arms resigned,
" Thy virgin charms must be consigned.
" Fear not—that holy father bears
" The lore of more than mortal years :
" Strange tidings tells—his wizard look
" Of past events is as a book.
" He whispers Mirza lives—is near—
" Yea ! in the battle will appear.
" But hence, I pray thee, loveliest, flee !
" A moment more—it may not be.
" He waits thee where the pagods beam
" Majestic o'er the bordering stream ;
" Convinced that here thy bonds were bound,
" He bade me range Camballia round,
" Thy flight to aid ; the forest side
" He paces still at even-tide.
" This mantle o'er thy vestment flung,
" This sabre from thy girdle swung,
" This turban round thy tresses turned,
" Through night thy sex is undiscerned.
" Away ! begone ! think not on me,
" My fairest, loveliest, dearest, flee !
" Nay, not a moment to reply ;
" A day, an hour, we both must die."
They kissed, they looked, embraced again,
And kissed, and wept, and kissed in vain ;
Endearments on departure add
Rapture to love, they make us mad ;
For lovers' hearts are warmer never
Than when they fear they part for ever.

One more embrace he snatched, the last—
The maiden from his arms he cast :
She went—she stayed—she waved her hand—
Her footsteps sought the armed band.
He sees her not—her steps are drowned
In tambours' crash, and cornets' sound :
His soul in her uncertain fate
Is all employed ; the dungeon gate
Unheeded, open, brightly beamed,
The cresset from the wicket streamed ;
The arches sound, the draw-bridge falls,
Beyond the moat the bugle calls ;
He mounts the rampart—hark ! they wind
The very path his hopes designed.
Down leapt the youth, and joyous bent
To the great gods benign of firmament.

XIV.

Two hours, in anxious, listening mood,
Had Appa leant him toward the wood ;
Distinct a horse's tramp was heard,
The challenge and the fortress word ;
Louder it grew : a steed shot past,
And at the draw-bridge drew at last ;
The bugle blew, the draw-bridge fell,
The word re-echoed—all was well.
The missive to Abdullah sped,
Proclaimed the female captive fled :
“ Myself a doubtful form descried
“ Pass secret by the forest side :

“ When hailed, it fled ; I then pursued
“ It through the mazes of the wood ;
“ My matchlock fired, the flight to wreak,
“ ’Twas answered by a woman’s shriek.
“ As near I drew, with blade to rive
“ The head of the false fugitive ;
“ Instant there started from the glade
“ A powerful champion to her aid—
“ He bore her off : I marked, unseen,
“ To where they wound transverse the screen ;
“ Within Gunputhee’s sacred fane
“ They both repose, and now are lain.
“ Returning to my post, afar,
“ This garment, and this green dustar
“ I found.”—Abdullah from his hand
Snatched both ; and maddening, gave command
To whelm with chains and fetters o’er
The slave that held her dungeon door.
His blade he bound, in murmuring mood,
And with the soldier sought the wood ;
The temple won, the chief alone
Before the sanctuary stone,
With naked steel, now keenly eyed
Imperfect light on every side,
And listened :—Hark ! a stilly breath,
Like the faint sighs of infant death,
Conducts him where, in slumbers deep,
Sagoona lay in calmest sleep,
Like those pale flowers that close with day,
Yet cast nor life nor sweets away.

Boldly he seized her, called "Arise!"
The virgin shrieked in wild surprise;
Instant an interposing hand
Seized on Abdullah, stayed his brand:
The Painim might not see the brow
That shrunk not from his sabre's blow;
His eye a muffling cowl concealed—
"Thy front," the Moslem said, "revealed
"Appals not me, vain fool: appear,
"Disclose thy form, I know not fear."
The gaunt, mysterious, muffled wight,
Led the stern Painim to the light;
Removed his cowl with gesture calm,
A murdered brother grasped his arm;
And, sternly frowning, held him there
As steadfast with his awful glare,
As if a molten statue stood,
And all but spoke its deeds of blood.

XV.

The Moslem from Sagoona broke,
As reft by heaven's thunder stroke;
And, turning from that hideous scene,
Cast his broad mantle o'er his mien,
Too fearful to behold the brow
He deemed had lain in dust below;
The horrid phantom went, and led
Sagoona to her stony bed.
Abdullah's limbs could scarcely bear
Him, sickening with unearthly fear.

Back to Camballia's walls he sped,
Awd by the living, haunted by the dead.

The captive Appa, fettered, chained,
Bore his hard thralldom, nor complained;
If safe Sagoona, all was well,
At least in her defence he fell.
But now to meet Abdullah's eye
Arraigned was youthful Appajee :
The Moslem seemed, in sullen hate,
To feign new tortures for his fate;
Nor for some moments deigned to speak,
But meditating mute on wreak,
Held his fierce eye, unerringly,
On the bound form of Appajee;
And seemed in worse than devilish mood
On novel cruelties to brood.

His black moustache he smoothed : forsook
The very blood his swarthy look;
While Appa, heedless of his hate,
Sighed for Sagoona's doubtful fate.

" A sigh !"—Abdullah, with a look
Of spite, denounced this harsh rebuke :

" I knew thee, dastard, unprepared

" To act what e'en a babe had dared :

" Fool that I was to trust to thee

" A purpose of audacity !

" False slave ! that coward heart of thine

" Hath lost what boldness had made mine.

" Nay, I suspect—oh ! if't be true,

" Well shall thy hireling soul beshrew—

"Hath lucre robbed me of my prey?
"Did gold thy murderous purpose sway?
"When ruth, nor piety could plead,
"To win thee from the guilty deed?"

XVI.

"Thou seest me shackled—chained—disarmed—
"Thy captive—victim—not alarmed.
"Rebuke me, scoff me, taunt and spurn,
"’Tis thine to suffer in thy turn;
"And were I now my state to choose,
"Thy guilty being I’d refuse;
"And rather, in these chains of mine,
"Would bear the tortures you design,
"Than shudder at the works of sin
"That wring thy spotted breast within.
"I’ve murdered never: all must die;
"I—hail a blest futurity;
"And men shall o’er my ashes weep,
"Lamenting my untimely sleep;
"And say, for all I fell by you,
"Who paid not mercy what was due.
"My life is thine, I dare to die,
"Thy utter malice dare defy;
"For death to me is but as bliss;
"When, guilty chief, shalt thou say this?
"And, for the fear I am charged withal,
"Let shame and scandal on thee fall.
"What! stain my steel with woman’s blood,
"The minister of thy base mood!

" Oh! when I saw the wretched maid,
" Bethought me that my battle blade
" 'Twere fitter far in her defence
" To wield, in aid of innocence,
" Than to thy fell decree to bend,
" And slay what nature bade defend.
" I, who her sternest foe should be,
" Was conquered by her misery:
" Haply, I thought, in after day,
" Such virgin might my bed array;
" That if to her, who bore my love,
" Some ruffian violence should prove,
" How to my soul the wish would cling
" To crush so cowardly a thing.
" What blessing to the man were due
" Who dealt by me, as I by you."

Grew pale the guilty chief, his brow
Inconstant waving high and low;
Well did he will, with wrathful eye,
To awe the youth's audacity.
He strove, but could not, dared not brook
The stripling's firm and pregnant look;
The very weakness of the youth
Enforced each dire, unvarnished truth.
I ween that if that warrior chief
Had sought with falchion his relief,
Had wished with wonted steel to quell
What facts the hated boy might tell,
His arm had failed; they seemed to be
An evil power and blessed divinity,

Like demon, conscious of offence,
Awed by an angel's innocence.

XVII.

"All are not dead," the youth resumed,
"Whom thy relentless temper doomed :
"Think not, vain man, that all are gone
"Whom thy stern hatred fixed upon.
"Assassins' hands will shake with fear,
"And valour desperate odds can bear ;
"The foul companion of misdeed
"Starts not his fellow to mislead ;
"And he in blood's achievements trained,
"Looks pleased on one more deeply stained."

Abdullah's anxious mind forgot
His own high power, the captive's lot ;
In wild emotion seized his hand,
That sunk beneath its iron band.
"Reveal ! reveal !" the Moslem cried,
"If Mirza live, or how he died !"
Yet faltering seemed to dread in thought
The horrid answer he besought.
"I might, perhaps, in later day,
"This clouded mystery betray ;
"When my untrammelled, fearless soul,
"Released from dastardly control,
"Could tell thee, with a voice too dread,
"Who smote with ruthless hand the dead.
"But mark me, chief, thy tongue shall rue
"That e'er this fell request it drew ;

" Well may thy sable cheek reveal
" How much thou dread'st the secret tale;
" Well may'st thou pause 'twixt doubt and fear;
" What! if the chieftain's self appear?
" Dead though thou think'st him, know that he
" Still breathes, still lives, aye more, is free!
" Rumor declares him now enslaved
" By one whom formerly he braved;
" Yet wizards tell th' oppressor shall
" Before his face, in combat, fall;
" Shall, in his moments of decease,
" Alien from virtue's holy peace,
" Hear every hateful crime revealed,
" Which he, vile despot, hath concealed.
" I glad to think the foeman proud
" Shall hear his guilt proclaimed aloud;
" That in the moments of his fate,
" He'll feel compunction, but too late;
" That, owning every guilty deed,
" By the wronged hero he shall bleed;
" And at the shrine of conscience pay
" The vices of his bloody sway."

The Moslem was appalled, forsooth,
At the bold virtue of the youth;
And fain had tried, on vengeful plea,
To palliate his dark decree.
But Appa, frowning on the chief,
Resumed again in sentence brief:
" 'Twas love of one departed long,
" That urged thee on that virgin's wrong;

" For sake of one returning never,
" To cast thyself from bliss for ever.
" What then had'st thought, if I had done
" The deed thy vengeance urged me on?
" She whom I saved is mine alone,
" And if my blood must hers atone,
" I shall rejoice, it thus should be,
" Sagoona saved by Appajee."

Abdullah started at a name
That summoned all the pride of fame ;
Enfettered there, unconsciously,
Before him stood that Appajee,
Of whom the world's unerring tongue
In universal praises sung.
And more triumphant in his chains,
That youth above the chieftain reigns ;
Though decked with all that power brings
To swell the circumstance of kings,
Than if beneath low safety's shield
He told the truths he now revealed.

XVIII.

Men who are truly great decree
Great men of their fraternity ;
What though in contest they contend ;
In peace each hails each peer his friend ;
Nor marks unmoved, o'er glory thrown
Mischance unworthy of renown.
Quick loosed from off the hero's frame
The bonds too base for such a fame ;

Abdullah bade him seek his host,
This obligation fixed at most,
To meet his arm on battle plain,
And there his high renown maintain.

There lurked a something great and good
Beneath Abdullah's vengeful mood;
Dark passions round his heart had grown,
But oft a beam of light was shown.
Oh! had his early youth been swayed
With care, ambition been allayed,
That mighty soul had never known
The darkness now around it thrown.

Young Appa promised, gave his hand,
To seek the Moslem brand to brand;
And with such dignity of port,
A feeling of such lofty sort,
Received his freedom from his foe,
It caused Abdullah's drops to flow.
The tears of man are wildly spent
For rapture, woe, or merriment.
The thought that warms not vulgar minds,
In nobler souls asylum finds;
Abdullah seldom dropt a tear:
Long used to blood, he never wept,
But ever sullen silence kept;
Yet this was virtue's harbinger—
And he, whose moody heart combined
Disdain with hate of all mankind,
Whose kindlier sense had ceased to glow,
Wept for a valiant foeman's woe.

Chance-governed man! The work of years,
Of ages, oft a moment bears.
Mankind on mighty moments wait,
A prompt decision blasts a state;
A moment's force, or fear, may roll
Mishap or bliss from utter pole to pole.
As when Napoleon, dangerously great,
Aspired to quell the fathers of the state,
And subject millions hung upon the deed;
Too awed to act, too guilty to recede,
The grand conception overpowered his breast,
And the vast thought the first of men oppressed;
An instant sunk beneath the pregnant plan,
His soul recoiled, and proved him—but a man:
A moment more, the despot was undone,
The weal of Gaul and liberty were won.
What! had the kindling patriots burst to flame,
They had not left one vestige of his fame.
Oh! that one ebb of freedom could reverse
The fate of nations, and the universe!²⁸
A bolder impulse had the despot hurled,
And changed the bloody annals of the world.

END OF CANTO III.

OPOLEYTA.

CANTO IV.

THE CAMP AND BATTLE.

I.

NOR had the parting fleeces of the east
Disclosed to eyelids light the welcome day,
Nor Goomlie shed on Beama's silent breast
The dark reflection of its palms, that sway
In undulation o'er its summits grey;
When issuing from Camballia, firm and slow,
Marched the bold bands in disciplined array;
And swelling murmurs from that host would flow,
Like sounds on mountains high from floods that rush below.

II.

And ere cerulean beams had cast their light
From Kāfs reflective, fundamental stone,²⁹
Abdullah's band, beneath the shroud of night,
O'er Beama's deep and darkling waters lone,

That brightly splash to horses' tramp, are gone ;
And, winding slowly up their steep defiles,
At intervals a sullen sound is thrown,
And stillness dead, and swelling tone at whiles,
As requiems rolling sad through old cathedral aisles.

III.

From the pale mansion of the east was given,
With darkness striving now, a feeble light ;
And, in the orient realms of starry heaven,
Young morning blushed to tread the reign of night.
Awhile, and every shrub and flowret, dight
In empyrean tears, refulgent beamed,
And swords, and spears, and targets clustering bright,
In flickering brilliance glinted far and gleamed,
While raised on high Abdullah's lofty ensigns streamed.

IV.

Heavens ! on this joyous champain's flowery sward
They wend, indifferent to fate's award ;
Where nought but loveliness the eye may scan,
And all is peaceful but the soul of man.
Here nature in exuberance supplies
All earthly charms beneath unclouded skies ;
Spontaneous flowers breathe sweetness as they throw
Their gorgeous tints o'er dimpling lymphs below ;
Wild roses blossom in impervious shade,
And jasmines cast their perfume through the glade :
Soft are the lays from all the woodland rung,
With gold and ruddy bloom enclustering hung ;

Here high embowering canes their glistening length
Shoot through the fig-tree's ever-spreading strength;
The broad-leaved plantain flaps o'er fountain springs,
And the cool breeze delicious fragrance flings;
Still wafting, on its wings of florid wealth,
The joyous airs of Paradise and health;
The golden orange tints each fairy grove,
And weaves its canopy for boundless love:
Yea, all appliances are here combined
To bless this land, the loveliest of mankind.
Oh! to return to these delightful scenes,
What bliss, what ecstasy my bosom weens!
For oft in these, reluming memory's eye
Would raise the home, the days of infancy;
And social revellers enjoy that dream
When friendship pledged, and England was the theme.³⁰
Yea, this the land where high-toned virtues pay
Atonement due for frail humanity;
Where nature shews, in unrestricted reign,
Here giant mountain, and wide-cultured plain;
Here hearts dilate frenetic at offence,
Yet swell and sigh with ever kinder sense;
Wild souls! of fierce extreme, deceit above,
In hatred ruthless, infinite in love.
Here frowning rocks impend o'er rushing floods,
Crowned with the majesty of ancient woods,
Whence thundering torrents sweep the bleak ravine,
And waste their waves where man hath never been.
Go thou! behold from bleak Caudalla's brow
The deep and darksome chasm that yawns below;

There eye, of ages old, the monstrous trees
Sway their wide arms obedient to the breeze;
As the shrill kites in steady circles wheel,
Spreading the pounce to seize the timid teale,
Till, from their low descent, th' attentive ear
Find nought but solitary silence there,
But for awhile; by fitful breezes cast,
Borne on the rustling pinions of the blast,
What thunder-sound hath solemn stillness racked?
Yon foaming tide, yon mountain cataract,
That, from its jangling bed impetuous hurled,
Like a wild soul, impatient of its world,
Flies fierce beneath, nor meets an equal shock,
Till the worn head of yon resplendent rock,
Whence, dashed in million stars, the deep below,
As the bright sunbeams on the sparkles glow,
Owns the lucific power, as sombre grief
Smiling when fortune sends a fair relief.
Nor thou alone to this majestic scene
Confine thy sense, but gaze on distant sheen;
Where far in view the waving forest lies,
All speckled o'er with happy villages,
And tall pagodas, streamer-crowned and gay,
Skimmed by the beams of horizontal day;
Waning in slow degrees, the orb declines,
Soft rising shade its parting light repines;
Now flaming gold the topmost branches loom,
They fade, they fail, they sleep in evening gloom.

V.

Abdullah's host have gained the camp designed,
Where many a soul eternity shall find;
Reckless, they bend no craven thought on fate,
But all impatient for the battle wait;
Let slothful ease appal its slave with fears,—
These were a band of bold adventurers.
Successful fray, to their uncultured thought,
Repaid their havoc, and was all they sought;
And one approving glance from him, their lord,
Was all the thoughtless soldiery's reward;
For he, the captain of the martial band,
Held every heart beneath his wise command;
Desert in arms ne'er pass'd his marking mind;
Shrewd chieftain he, and master of mankind,
Gave valor what was due, nor paid to birth
The bright pre-eminence of martial worth:
To his discerning mind the *work* of fame
Was more ennobling than an olden name;
And ancestry but bade a son aspire
To emulate the glory of his sire.

VI.

'Twas now what time the radiant lamp of day
Shot fierce beneath its never failing ray;
When toils are hushed, and kindly slumbers pour
Their grateful balm to soothe the fervid hour;
The browsing drove forsake the sultry plain,
And seek the shade and deep embowered reign;

The drowsy herdsman tends his flock along,
And sauntering onward drawls a wonted song.
Haply some neighbouring water's broad expanse,
Whose glimmering eddies flash inconstant glance,
Invites the pastured buffalo to lave
His broad, dark bosom in the burnish'd wave ;
Or where the silent and umbrageous wood,
With darkling shelter girds the glassy flood,
There rest the weary herd, and round them wheel
The buzzing swarm, and urge their lulling peal ;
All nature wears a dormant calm serene,
And universal stillness woos the torpid scene.

Though through the glow of tents no moving wight
Give apprehension to the hostile sight ;
All wakeful, all prepared, Abdullah's band
Await the signal, cimeter in hand.
Hark ! from the chief's pavilion roars the gun,
Like lightning flash they burnish in the sun ;
Quick as the wall of Jericho displayed
The foes of God to Joshua's holy blade,
Or seemed as resurrection's trump had sped
A dusty world from its oblivious bed.

VII.

Towards Opoleyta's sun-spread turrets made
The Arab infantry and cavalcade,
While fierce artillery, sweeping o'er the ground,
Awoke the thunder of the mountains round.
A dusty cloud involves Abdullah's host,
The fluttering standards faintly seen at most ;

High on the yellow walls of Opoleyta
The infant group and city matrons meet,
And through its precincts raise the fearful cry,
In supplication to their gods on high.
The gates are gained : from Opoleyta's towers
An iron war the steady cannon pours ;
And many a wight of desperate renown
Finds dark eternity and glory's crown.
The portals splinter at the culverin's flash,
Shake, yawn, and burst with one tremendous crash.
As when a dyke, by ocean surges pressed,
Bears for a while the thunder on its breast,
But yields at length ; wide yawns the ruined mound,
The waves rush in, and spread their fury round.
But there, to face the bold impulsive band,
The death-devoted, fearless Raujepoots stand ;
Their firm-paced valor shocks the rushing flood,
The labouring wave rolls back through all the moving
crowd :
Their curling locks were loose, the death-song sung,
The peaceful scabbards of the steel were flung ;
The Gods invoked, the wonted pledge they gave,
Doomed to the cold, but not dishonoured, grave ;
For when they see the host resistless move,
They slay the tender partners of their love ;
For them life's charms are passed, are nothing worth,
No blessing weds them to the lothed earth ;
Incentive drugs the proffered chalice crown,
And death beams grateful in his darkest frown ;

In frantic dance their polished blades they wield,
And clash the naked terrors on the shield ;
Then in accordant pace, with grim resolve,
Their kindled fury on the foe devolve.³¹

VIII.

The Moslem saw, his heart's blood chilled to see
The purpose of the stern fraternity ;
The loud trump sounds, its thrilling clangor darts
Delight ineffable to martial hearts ;
The contest raged, and many a shriek and yell
Told infancy, and age, and woman fell.
One voice above the din imperious rose,
" More blood ! no quarter ! they are Pagan foes !"
And where is Appa ? bathed in bloody red,
All pale and wounded on his weltering bed
He lies. But hark ! what cries his ear approach ?
The wounded hero started from his couch,
Though nearly spent, no longer to remain
A tame spectator of his children slain,
A spectacle of death, he seized the sword
With blood still reeking, and his gods implored ;
Ferociously on knee both hands he clasped,
And grimly eyed the cimeter they grasped,
Looking unutterable thoughts, as, dumb,
His preguant visage told of wreck to come.
Fierce in array fought many a serried band,
And singled foes contested brand to brand,
When Appa came, the hurricane to share,
To strike for freedom, and to perish there.

Strength to that brave man's arm, who'er he be,
Who combats for his country's liberty!
Oh! never where that high-toned spirit reigned,
Oppressive hosts success or glory gained;
For chains shall never be that country's part,
Where every soldier bears a patriot heart:
E'en though the cause *be* fatal to the brave,
What time so meet to hollow virtue's grave,
As when proud freedom sinks amid her fires,
And heaven-descended Liberty expires?

Old Abba with his host intrepid fought,
As through the war the Moslem chief he sought,
Imbued with all that zealous hatred sheds,
When stern religion sways deluded heads;
Exclaiming on his foe, the raging king
Broke through opposing ranks, fierce combating,
As ships through ocean cleave before the wind,
And eddying waves conjoin in wrath behind.
They met—contested—brief the tale to tell,
The Moslem vanquished, and the patriarch fell;
And though a pallid ghastliness of mien
On his expiring countenance was seen,
Yet through death's agony his eye unfurled
Belief in visions of an after world,
A glance that beamed with hope; it was the smile
Of dying martyrs at the burning pile.
His failing utterance no soul might hear,
For louder rolled the hurricane of war,
When rallying wildly, in impetuous tide,
The kindling patriots reckless fought and died,

And prayer forsaking, shrine, and temple domes,
Function and age struck boldly for their homes.

The Moslem host, o'erpowered by gathering bands,
True to the last, opposed with feebler hands;
Though toil and numbers still their arms subdued,
Each soldier perished sternly where he stood;
But round Abdullah many a flickering blade
Vindictive clashed, and vengeful strokes essayed:
And quailed that chief? or staid he to oppose,
Nor shrunk appalled from hosts of rallying foes?
As firm as Chimborazzo's awful form,
When Andes' volumes in tumultuous storm
Around his head rebellious whirlwind fling,
Conspiring vain to whelm their mountain king;
And there had fought, till cleft his turban'd head
Had lain on earth, companion of the dead;
But swelling surges, rolled with murmuring sound,
Swept friend and foeman from his battle ground;
Poured from the gates of Opoleyt they sped
Like mountain flood from its contracted bed
To champain plains, where, calmed by slow degrees,
It flows expanded through the vale of peace.

IX.

Retreating to their camp, the Moslem host
In sullen, silent thoughtfulness were lost;
And many a tear from eyes of soldier stole,
Who sought in vain the comrade of his soul.
Though mute were all, yet stern expression fell
From every look, of more than speech might tell;

There some would pause, and inward seem to ask,
 Why thus relinquish such an easy task?
 Or, gained that camp whence many a brave man sped,
 Who mingled now for ever with the dead,
 Would gaze on Opoleyta's heights afar
 In anxious dream of more successful war;
 And resting on their arms, mishap upbraid,
 Till evening wrapped its minarets in shade.
 Night o'er the slaughtered frowned, the first of death
 To friend and foe who paid their latest breath,
 To thousand living wights the last of time,
 For day shall break on slaughter, war, and crime.

Ere yet the martial brood had laid away
 The weight of war, and mixed in thoughtless joy,
 A herald comes from widowed Opoleyta,
 The proud relentless Moslem to entreat;
 To treat of peace, and for the noble slain
 To proffer sepulture and funeral train.
 Vain essay that: to peace his iron heart
 Was stubborn as the rock to pointed dart;
 And for the slain, whose thread of life was rent,
 This answer back the haughty Moslem sent.

THE MOSLEM'S REPLY.

- " No grave so great the chief o'erwhelms
 " As that in battle field,
 " Where to exalt his native realms,
 " He fell with sword and shield.
 " Pomp o'er the dust of kings may rear
 " Its monumental pride,
 " The brave man's lasting fame is where
 " In glorious cause he died."

X.

Throughout the camp the kindled fires were bright,
And toilsome day was closed in festive night;
Carousing jovial round the sparkling brands,
The fellow soldiers told of different lands,
And each would marvel at another's word,
And all to speak were bent, and none were heard,
And each against the turbulence would rail,
The happy hero of his own vain tale.
Oh! well that merry band the camp became,
Their umber faces shining to the flame;
Mid soldier jest they made their rough repast,
And happy wore that night, perhaps the last;
To-morrow's eve might some in battle lie
Outstretched and cold—what then, why all must die;
And death's dim nothingness is least to him
Who bends not vainly o'er a future dream.

There sat, amid that scene of revelry,
One who seemed fitted for a fate more high
Than the rude merriment of soldiery;
Few were his years of life, he was forsooth
In very semblance but a thoughtful youth;
Yet the fixed, pensive sadness of his eye
Gave him that still and cold solemnity,
Which rarely reigns in youth's delightful age.
A soldier, he had conned the lorish page,
And somewhat of respect and fame had gained,
When gay of mood his wit once entertained.
Faults! he had most, yea all the faults in truth
That passion genders in the breast of youth;

But nobleness was woven so with them
That one admired while yet he would condemn;
They were the transient frailties that depart
When careful reason weeds the fruitful heart.
Thou'st marked fantastic streaks of stormy dye
Wax dark, and vanish o'er the western sky;
E'en fleeting as those clouds of beauteous hue,
The wild excess which in that bosom grew.
Accustomed he to scorn mankind's lament,
To destiny and woe indifferent,
Once rather smiled than wept at human ills,
And thought none wretched but the wight that wills.
Misfortune came? mischance he reckless bore,
Regret for evil was but one pang more;
From fate ne'er shrinking, with the world he strove,
Yea, lightly gay, e'en scoffed the pains of love;
But now himself bowed, melancholy, wan,
To that great tyrant o'er the soul of man.
"I marvel much," exclaimed a soldier rude,
"What thoughts of care o'er Kureem's mind obtrude;
"He that was wont to scoff all human cares,
"At length himself some moody moments bears.
"I pledge my falchion that our former sage
"Grows young in wisdom as he walks in age,
"And finds some bauble woman's heart hath more
"Of power to torture than he deemed of yore.
"I trust that love's obstruction may not lead
"Our once gay youth to slumber with the dead."
(For many there had thought that Kureem paused
On bold designs to quell what love had caused.)

" But cheer thee, prithee, hence with pensiveness,
" Thy mistress absent loves thee not the less.
" Away with sorrow now the bowl goes round,
" And cheer thy fellows with some jovial sound!"
" Not mine, gay brother, to enliven now,
" And yield the pleasure which no more I know:
" No festive strain the heart of sadness weaves,
" Its tones as woeful as the theme it grieves;
" Albeit for thee, to cherish thought, I'll strive
" The fiction of a weary hour to give."

KUREEM'S SONG.

1.

Ere death hath expelled every sense from my heart,
Let me leave these memorials for you;
For the love which in life I might never impart
On eternity's brink I renew.

2.

I wreath thee a garland of wild flowers bloom
That blossom to evening's breath,
In prodigal sweetness around the green tomb
Of love, which ne'er fled but with death.

3.

The tears ever shed by affection sincere
In a crystalline chain I compose;
Where brighter and clearer each gem doth appear
Than the dew-drops that diamond the rose.

4.

When o'er me the deep umbrage of cedars shall wave,
Interwoven with cypress and yew,
And sway their dark boughs o'er the suicide's grave,
Where no flowret of sweetness e'er grew ;

5.

To thee virgin mourners shall requiems sing,
And hail thine enthronement on high ;
But o'er my grave in gloom shall the hoarse raven's wing
Flap at eve to the cold Zephyr's sigh.

6.

May the various hues of the chaplet I weave
Resemble thy joys when I'm dead ;
And my numberless tears, by the chain that I leave,
Be recalled when my spirit is fled.

End of Song.

Modest he bent ; his wan, dejected eye
Spoke bashfully for such a melody.
" We thank thee, Kureem," cried that merry group,
" But cheer thee, friend, ne'er let thy courage droop."
" And I," cried one, " will tune my rugged voice ;
" Come, joy be with us while we may rejoice."
Mīr Hussein now his notes to pleasure paid,
As brave a he as e'er fleshed sabre blade ;
A reckless chief, prepared and bent to all,
To lead his horsemen, or to mount the wall ;

Round midnight flame the cheering bowl to quaff,
Tell his broad tale, and rouse the vulgar laugh.
A recreant Moslem! bred in war's turmoil,
With just as much of faith as suited toil:
Nought heeded he, he drained the purple wine,
Yet turned five times a day to Mecca's shrine;
Neglected all that social revel cramps,
And loved the jovial turbulence of camps:
He was no coy solicitor of bliss,
Who fed desire on one conceded kiss;
Loved not that bashful diffidence of eyes
That checks the impulse, yet exalts the prize.
Oh! he affected woman, warm and wild,
But not the timid and unripened child:
He loved to clasp a woman in his arms,
And rove in rapture o'er expanded charms;
Drank deep, fought fierce, did all on nature's plan,
No puny youngling, but a bearded man;
Aside his falchion and caloon he flung,
And roughly thus his careless verses sung.

MIR HESSEIN'S SONG.

1.

Let soldiers unite
In their cups of delight
Ere the havoc of warfare arise;
And every brave soul
Drink deep of the bowl
Ere the morrow have shadowed his eyes.

2.

The hardships of fate
Let us reckless await,
Since destiny ne'er is severe;
To the heart of the brave
Who can look on the grave,
Nor shrink from the thoughts of the bier.

3.

If victory bless,
Why our girls shall caress,
And repay us the toils of affray;
And trumpets that sound,
O'er the dead on the ground,
Shall bear them to heaven away.

4.

When culverins rattle
The thunder of battle,
What then if in glory we die;
From earth we remove
To the blisses above,
And mix with the Houris on high.

5.

The chieftain's brave health,
His long life and his wealth!
And success in the desperate hour!
May Abdullah still prove,
In battle and love,
Like the prophet in prowess and power³².

The merriment was hushed; throughout the field,
The hardy chiefs were pillowed on the shield,
And there from weary life more peace they win,
Than kings can boast in all their festive sin;
So sweet the sleep, that waits on toilsome day,
And chases labor's pain and care away.
Alone Abdullah that calm rest refused;
O'er the white embers of the brands he mused,
And lowering, showed, with head reclined on hilt,
The dark and thought-marked lineaments of guilt.
"What weary years," the hoary chieftain said,
"Have rolled o'er Syed's unavenged bed!
"Yet still to me his treasured semblance brings
"A father's weakness and the hate of kings.
"Ullah be praised! the sanguine deed's returned,
"My sword took vengeance, and my foot hath spurned.
"The infidel hath fallen beneath my blow,
"And fled to darkness and despair below.
"I thought not thus, when in his cradled hours,
"I fondly strewed his cherub form with flowers,
"And cherished visions of his future fame,
"And marked his bosom with his father's name,
"When my fond hand the crescent moon impressed
"In deathless colours on his infant breast—
"I thought not Hope's last, solitary wreath
"To crown my age, was vengeance for his death—
"Thanks to decay, life's toil will soon be o'er,
"And I shall sleep in dust for evermore;
"My birth I damn not—'tis an useless sin
"To curse the fate which forced us to have been,

" But they, whose tears have wept *this* being's pain,
" Will tremble, crouch and shrink to be again."

XI.

The stars more faintly twinkled now
Above the mountain's misty brow,
And light and darkness doubtful strove
O'er every cool unruffled grove,
Uncertain as the trembling line,
Where rose and lily blooms combine,
And imperceptive blend their streak
On beauty's fair and blushing cheek;
When falchions' clash and battle din
In war's impulsive hurricane,
With trumpet blast and chargers' tramp
Shot sudden through the sleeping camp,
And tambours loud and cornet's sound
Called warriors to their battle ground;
 As rising from his ocean bed,
The orb of day lucific shone
On many a brave and noble one,
Who, ere his evening beam were gone,
 Should fleet the regions of the dead.
Lo! when the armed hosts appear,
The ensigns from their bright ranks flare,
Or reared on high the crescents glare
 From bannerols of green,
Far streaming o'er the serried line
Of champing horse and warlike shine,
 That move to martial harmony,

As hymning to the lord of war,
Their canticles are borne afar,
 With prayer for death or victory.
And oft the swelling breeze would tell
 To Opoleyta's murmuring force,
 In mighty acclamation hoarse,
Some haughty imprecation fell.
 Till near and nearer closing now,
Each army told the hostile tread
That firmly in accordance sped
 To fray of enemy and foe;
Viewing with dumb attention's eye
 The storm that gathering frowned,
As mariners in silence mark
The tempest sweeping toward the bark,
Ere yet the waves are tossed on high,
 Or heaven hath rolled its thunder sound.

XII.

The foes are met, the hour is come,
The doubtful fray not yet begun:
 And few shall bear the annals home
Of how the day was lost or won.
 Each army sends its horrent shout
To war's empurpled gory shrine:
Ere blood hath stained a sabre shine
 Or foes have mixed in deadly rout,
The trumpet sounds, and speeding wind
Adown the sloping mountain's side,
The Jarejah and Raujepoot pride,

The lordly chivalry of Ind.

And well the Moslem host could see,
Inspiring Opoleyta's band,

In high and martial homily,
The youthful leader of her land ;
One too there was of older years
Exhorting all his brave compeers,
On white and gallant charger backed,
In guise of yorish cataphract ;

He leads them to the darkened pale
Where desperate foes contend,
And to that cloud-encumbered vale
Succeeding hosts descend—

On column column, rank on rank,
They glittered on the mountain brow,
Ere fierce descending thence, they sank
In clouds of rolling smoke below ;

It seemed to those on high,
As if the fiends of hell were hurled
From day into a nether world,

All destined there to die.—
It were a scaring spectacle
To see the many there that fell

Amid the fight of foes,
As through the mingled dust and smoke
The sudden flash of cannon broke,

And tattered banners rose,
And doubtful voices rent the sky
With glorious shouts of victory—
Aloof Abdullah marked the fight,
Nor shrunk but gloried at the sight,

And fiercely gave commands ;
For numbers of his bravest there
Fought the wild battle of despair,
Surrounded by outnumbering bands.
But now Camballia's phalanx yields
To cleaving swords and flying spears ;
Yet slow receding firmly rears
A canopy of serried shields.
The chieftain's kindling eye could tell,
That Opoleyta's standard rose
Triumphant o'er her yielding foes,
Each bravely fighting till he fell.
That ensign wont to wave on high
Amid the hymns of victory !
Shall Moslem chieftain see it droop ?
And sullied by a *Pagan* troop !
The thought his proud heart goads.
He staid not—to the war he sped—
An instant shout of joy began,
As onward moving at their head,
Like Carticeya in the van
Of his embattled gods,
He led them to the deaf'ning scene,
With all a chieftain's taunted spleen.
Far louder now the din is given ;
And darker still it's wreaths to heaven
The clouded war upsends ;
And mingling indistinctly rise
Victorious shout and murtherous cries
That pain with triumph blends.

XIII.

Ever throughout that troubled fray
Dark Mahadev near Abdullah pass'd,
Then swiftly held his course away,
But ever on the chieftain cast
A cruel, keen, mysterious eye,
As if his evil spirit sought
A moment for some deed in thought
Of horrible malignity.
But wheresoe'er stern Mahadev wends,
Still his suspicious course attends
That strange appointed wight,
And more than once his guardian hand
Had turned the edge of Appa's brand,
When fierce, in single fight,
Oppressive tempest quick it shed
Around the hoary Moslem's head—
Sonorously the welkin rang
To culverins and jarring clang
Of deadly implements;
For Arab matchlock sounded there,
Mahratta sword, and Rajepoot spear,
In warlike dissonance;
And many an olden lordless shield
Was trampled on that bloody field.
The Moslem host pursuing cry
In triumph o'er the enemy,

Throughout that deep tumultuous vale,
Swept by the hoarse contentious gale,
In thunders rushing, wild and deep,
As whirlwinds tear Bomullan's³³ steep
Destructive, and in volumes sweep

Its high fantastic form :

It seemed the fabled god of wind
Had to their violence consigned
The rebel blasts, and all combined

Let rage their tempest storm.

Rolled undulating through the smoke,
The eye might tell where squadrons broke,
As on their snowy turbans fell
The sun, and lit each bickering steel,
From fierce collision broken, thrown
Like waves from ocean-stranded stone ;
When, gleaming through the murky night,
They give their sparkling crests to light,
And hurled in yesty conflict bright

Explode in clamor hoarse :

Casting their mountain forms afar,
Undaunted to tempestuous jar

Of controverted force.

The war is hushed that roared aloud,
The breeze hath broke the cumbrous cloud,
And through its brown and tattered shroud

Lo, Opoleyta's woe !

Abdullah's high uplifted hand
Sustains a blood-empurpled brand,
And Appa gasps below.

Beside the fallen chieftain kneels
A youth in wild despair;
His upcast eye to heaven appeals,
Imploring God to spare.
He clasps him in his arms, he tears
The angreka from off his breast;
When the proud crescent moon appears,
And stern Abdullah's name expressed.
Revenge is crowned, the deed is done,
The wretched sire hath slain the son!

XIV.

Mahadev was nigh, his spiteful grin
Burst hateful on the horrid deed;
Exulting at his purposed sin
That destined Syed thus to bleed.
"He *was* thy son, and I am he
"Who led him at a god's command
"To meet the stroke of destiny,
"And perish by a father's hand.
"I too am he who urged thy will
"To triumph over nature's strife,
"And bend thy better heart to kill,
"Who found in thee his best of life.
"Yea, Mirza guiltless fell by thee,
"By me belied; my deeds are owned;
"I've honored my divinity,
"My temple's shame is now atoned."
This said—his anlace thrice he waved
Above his turban-circled head,

In posture bold, as though he braved
All vengeance for the hapless dead ;
Rejoicing as a fiend to see
The triumph of impiety.

The youth who sorrowed o'er the slain
In seeming lifelessness was lain,
But now sprung startling from the earth,
As risen to a second birth ;
Then gazing with a wilder'd mien,

In doubt of that the false Hindu
Had uttered, writhed a frantic smile,
Approaching the stained chief the while ;

His dagger from the sheath he drew,
And with a more than human spleen
Plunged to the very hilt his blade,
When lo ! on earth fell Mahadev laid.
The demon gasped—distractedly
The youth clasped fallen Appajee,

One last embrace bewildered caught ;
His girdle and his turban took,³⁴
And with a wild despairing look

On mettled steed the battle sought.
Then struggling with his bubbling wound,
Malicious Mahadev tore the ground ;
His look as vengefully malign
As that of dying Catiline ;
But not in penitential death
He gave the winds his latest breath :
His steel he grasped, and fiercely rose
Amid the circle of his foes ;

And not, though numbers closed him round,
Gave he, but desperate held his ground;
With rapid sword, and beaten shield,
Sustained the stoutest of the field;
Though ebbing from his dagger wound,
His blood in torrents stained the ground,
He yielded not; but, sunk on knee,
Dealt his fierce strokes vindictively,
Till turban lost, and corselet cleft,
Of cimeter and shield bereft;
With many a gash on trunk and limb,
Livid his mien, and vision grim,
He writhing fell; and, in his fall,
With grinning hatred cursed them all.

XV.

The chief, whose unrevealed mien
Through all that troubled battle scene
Had worked amazement, backward threw
His verdant robe, and gave to view
The very phantom form that staid
Abdullah in the midnight glade;
The self-same haughty, withering mien,
That shook fell Mahadev at the shrine;
'Twas Mirza's self, though hope and grief
Had marked his visage with their strife.
"Demoniac slave!" the chieftain said,
His eye bent on the vicious dead,
"These are thy deeds, Impiety
"Achieved beneath a holy plea;

"The foulest sin, the name sublime
"Assumed by guilt to sanction crime!"

Before the Moslem chief aghast,
All, all like dreaming visions passed;
Though Opoleyta's broken spear,
Her shivered flag, and trampled shield,

To sad beholders' eyes declare
The woe of her disastrous field,
Yet not the haughty Moslem chief

The fruits of that victorious day
Hath heaven's doom allowed to reap;
From farther lands a bright array
Now glimmer on the mountain steep;
They come to hurl the Painin's crown,
And shake the proud oppressor's throne.

Time was, when that stout heart had stood
Against the myriads of the world;
But truth had now her tale unfurled,

And penitence and grief subdued.
In silent thought the Moslem paused
On that his vengeful mood had caused;
With crowding recollections eyed
The bravest of Camballia's pride;
And with a stifled sigh surveyed
His old victorious hosts arrayed.
Destruction! yea, his sword had brought
Dismay, and desolation wrought,
Where'er his towering hopes inspired
Design, or glory's visions fired;
Nor function spared he, age, nor land,
But swept, with desolating hand,

E'en nature's pleading loveliness,
With unabating pride's excess;
Mark where he might, to grace his crown,
More blood-stained trophies of renown.
Yet guilt's encroaching wreck withstood
One feeling—'twas his people's good:
The gem within the loathsome form,
The star that glimmered through the storm.
His dark revealing eye was fraught
With firm resolve, and awful thought;

 He reared his ordering hand;
Ere uttering his high decree,
He bade his subject hosts be free,
And with a lordly dignity
 Renounced his old command;
Sublime as when Flaminius decreed
 To the attendant sons of fallen Greece,
Of rising Rome th' inestimable meed,
 The mighty boon of liberty and peace.

XVI.

He leaves a nation born to fame,
Which his achieving prowess won,
In equal toils with every one
 Who fought beneath his mighty name;
The laurelled wreath that forehead wears,
Though dashed with blood and nations' tears,
To restless soldiery appears
 A diadem more bright,
Than fear and weakness ever bound

The brow of subtle priest around,
In superstition's night:

They knew him guilty, but they knew
Ambition's deeds *are* stained with blood,
'Twas not they thought him purely good,

But that in potency he grew,
With less of wickedness and sin

Than they with lust of power mad
Have shewn of yore; *he* had but been

The very boldest of the bad.

Ere Appa's lips were closed for aye,
He bade to search throughout the fray,
To see if there Sagoona fought;
When sadly from its pale is brought
A lifeless, warm, and mangled wight,
Who perished in the deadly fight.

Around the waist an argent zone,
A turban o'er its temples thrown;
'Those weeds of Appajee appear,
And speak the story of despair;
For, pierced with many a mortal wound,
Yet grasping in its tender hand
The dinted, bloody, shattered brand,
Sagoona's lifeless form was found:

She speaks not, moves not, life is flown,
Yet blood-drops from her bosom drip,

And her soft cheek is paler grown,
And freshness flies her vermil lip;
That lip, where nature's hand had given
Earth's brightest hue, the breath of heaven.

On Appa's dead and wounded breast
Her dark dishevelled head they rest ;
For he is gone, and there they lie
United in eternity.

Abdullah could not bear the scene :

He mounted on his dun war horse,
Commanding by his frowning mien,
That none should heed his secret course,
He shunned the sight, his fiery steed
Careering at his utmost speed.

He parts, he leaves his own formed men,
Remote to roam on alien shores,
But they shall wish that chief again,
And chance may yield what hope implores.

XVII.

The sun was waning, large and red,
Behind high Goomlie's burnish'd head,
And o'er the mountain ridges shed
A stream of dazzling gold ;
A dusty cloud arose on high,
When wending fleet and distantly
A speeding form was told :
It seemed awhile to tarry there,
And cast its suppliant arms in air,
As if some pilgrim wandering far
Reluctant paused on mountain bar,
Indulging sad one lingering gaze
On scenes of early, happy days.
High o'er the wide, unruffled lakes
His flight the hoarse flamingo takes :

To mango bowers the peacock hies,
And gathers from the western skies
Effulgence on his thousand dyes.
Delightful sight it is to see

That valley in its evening hue ;
Such pure, such calm serenity,
The Moslem's fabled heaven on high
Is there on earth expanded true.

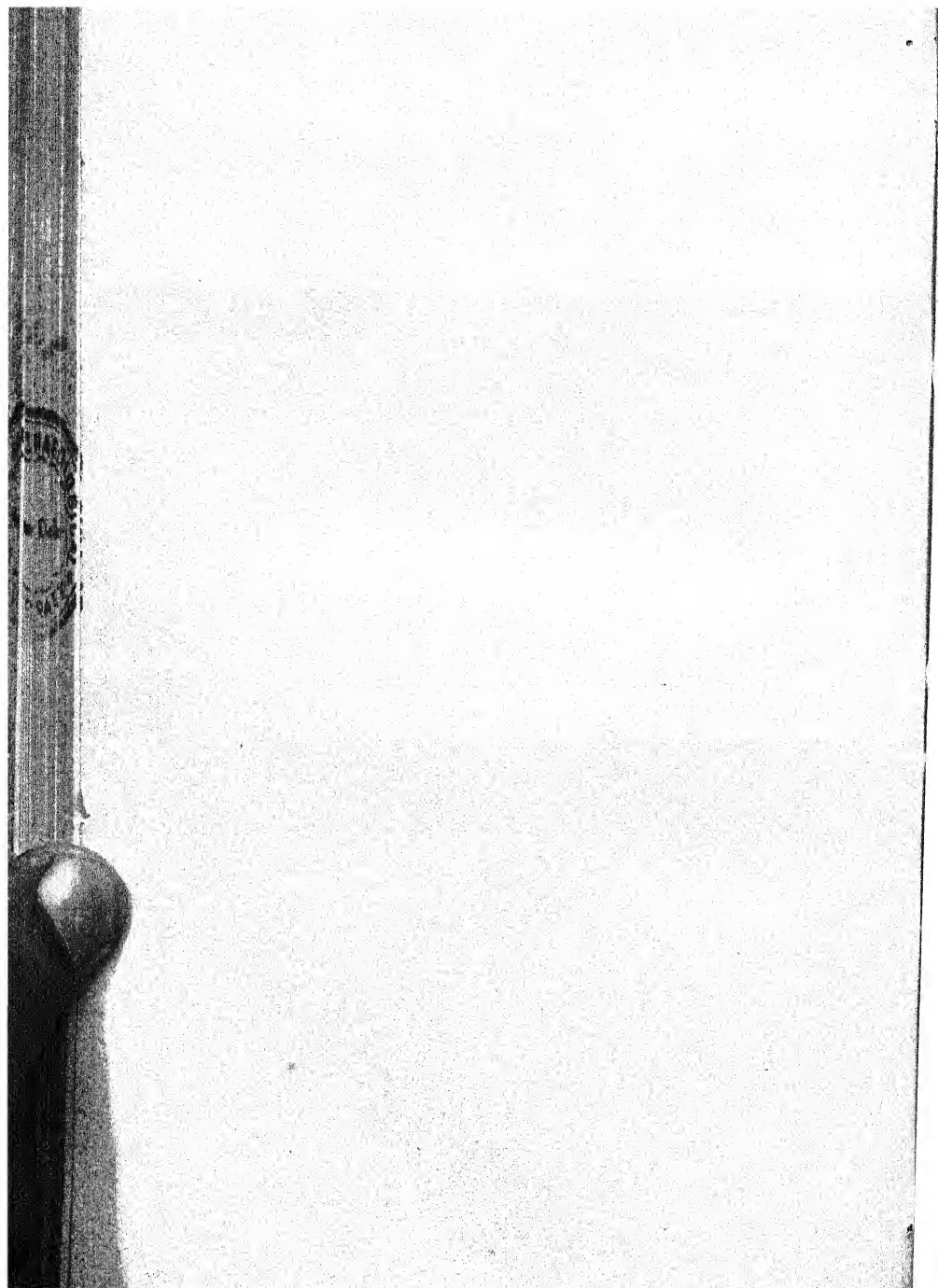
Pomegranate, lime, and tamarind,
Their foliage with the myrtle blend,
And all their breathing blossoms vie
In exquisite diversity :
It seems as nature's bounteous hand
Had realized a fairy land ;
So rich its air, so cool each rill,
The scene so lovely, heavenly still.
Go, Christian, list the holy fire
That breaks throughout the Pagan choir !
I've heard, when the reposing breeze
Shook not one sapling of the trees,
Devotion's canticles arise
So softly to the twinkling skies,
That scarce my Christian soul denied
To enter in their holy pride,
So zealous rose their song, so saintly died.

Sagoona gone, Abdullah fled,
No legend tells his destiny,
And Appa slumbers with the dead,
Laid low in Moslem cemetery.

The sculpture on his humble tomb
Recounts fell Mahadev's bigot crime,
And tells the sorry tale to time,
A father dealt young Syed's doom.
His lonely ashes now remain
Beside the sacred Moslem fane;
For there, by mantling palm-trees hid,
Rears modestly the white musghid;
Its holy spire may oft be seen,
Clothed in such melancholy dyes,
'Tis easy from the sight to ween
A blessed spirit near it lies:
And often hath my boyhood thought,
Some kindly angel there had shed
Solemnity with beauty fraught,
And such a hallowed sadness wrought
In all who to its precincts sped,
As if to bid unholy feet
Ne'er trespass on the silence sweet
That reigns around the peaceful dead.
The village children idly stray,
To cull around its cupola
Wild sweets to weave a flower crown;
And many a mystic tale is known,
To those who near the temple dwell,
Of midnight knolling passing bell,
And melody of sightless sprite
Heard at the silent hour of night;
Such legends as delight our youth
Ere fancy yields to sober truth.

But now fair Opoleyt is red,
And scattered with the many dead.
Ambition's crime is writ in blood
Where'er her sanguine flag hath stood,
And many a hero, great and good,
Hath stained her gory shrine ;
But whose this cold and slaughtered heap,
These fellow-men in death so deep,
Where breathless foes by foemen sleep ?
Religion, these are thine !

NOTES.



NOTES

TO

C A N T O I.

And minstrel pipe and chime of temple bell.

Page 2, line 5.

It is usual in India after sunset to visit the pagodas, which are perfumed with incense generally kindled at that delightful hour. The fanatic devotion of the Hindûs is attended by an incessant and sonorous chime, which to christian ears has a far more infernal than celestial character.

The lazem keeps its own laborious calendar.

Page 2, line 24.

The taaleem khaneh is usually under ground, and of sufficient loftiness to allow the muqdoor to pass between the head of the Pheilwân and the cieling. The Pheilwâns are famous Indian *gymnics*, who derive their principal nutrition from milk, and refrain in particular from feminine enjoyment. Before they begin their exercises they besmear their bodies with red powder. The muqdoors are wooden instruments of conical form, having handles at the smaller end; their weight of course adapted to the capability of the bearer. The utility of this exercise is that it expands the chest and invigorates the arms. The dun is performed on all fours:

the curious reader may possibly have met a more accurate description of its performance than I can allow myself to give. The lazem is composed of a stiff piece of wood and a strong brazen chain united as a bow and bowstring. The chain is hung with many rings, which make a jingling noise. The method of this exercise is to widen the chain and stick first on one side, then on the other, and afterwards, by extending them sufficiently to admit the head and neck between them.

Soliciting the sapient godhead's light.

Page 6, line 14.

Gunputhee, Guneis, or Gunesa, the God of Wisdom.

A sharp serseja was his bed.

Page 11, line 12.

Serseja, a bed of spikes. You may see this instrument of torture faithfully depicted in the 5th vol. of the Asiatic Researches, at the article of Purrum, Soatuntree, Purkasanund, Bremchary, by Mr. Jonathan Duncan. The pains of *Jelseja* are intense; it diffuses a horrible frigidity around the forehead and temples, which it is wonderful that human nature can sustain. The former species of mortification is not to be found in the eighteen Tupisyas recorded by the Shaster; but as two renowned devotees, Agniburna in the first, and Ravona in the second, Yug, employed it, many Hindu fanatics have chosen to follow their example in the Calé Yug. Read (it will amuse you) the article to which I have referred.

The melody of Persic lays.

Page 12, line 13.

The Hindu minstrels are frequently versed in the popular

melodies of Persia, which they adapt to the music of the vene.

Gifted with faithful Syriac brand.

Page 20, line 1.

The swords of Damascus are esteemed in the East as well as in European countries.

Was still that whole Durbar about.

Page 20, line 8.

Durbar implies the prince and courtiers in council.

A low sala'am to Abba made.

Page 21, line 13.

A term vulgarly given to the salutation of touching the turban with the hands. "Salaam," according to Richardson, is a mysterious word formed by the abbreviation of an Arabic phrase, implying, "the blessing and peace of God be with him."

And all the sacred offerings bore.

Page 22, line 24.

It is usual to offer rice, sugar, fruit, flowers, ghee, and even money at the shrine of oriental divinities; these offerings are placed on a stone which lies in front of the deity. I myself had once the honour of presenting a nuzzer, or piece of silver, to the living god at Chichore, who, to the best of my remembrance, was a very ugly and avaricious old man.

With poison drugged the waters sweet.

Page 23, line 26.

The practice of nauseating the waters is very commonly

adopted by eastern soldiers to retard the progress of an offensive army.

The vicinage a desert loomed.

Page 23, line 30.

In India the certain consequence of warfare is the desolation of those provinces which are likely to become the scene of action. Most readers are acquainted with the destructive character of the wars which were waged by Juswunt Rao. The Dekhan is but just recovering from the wilderness and depopulation occasioned by that bloody chief; and melancholy spectacles of human skulls are still seen in the Mahratta districts, around the ruins of desolate towns and villages. The impressive picture given by Mr. Burke of Hyder Ali's havoc in the Carnatic, forms but too faithful a parallel to the generality of oriental wars.

NOTES

TO

C A N T O II.

Fierce as their venom'd snake expands its hood.

Page 29, line 10.

Cobra de Capello. Immediately that the anger of this snake is roused it erects one half of its body from the earth, expands its hood, and darts at the object it designs to bite. It is usually between four and five feet in length. Its eye has a peculiar brilliance, and I once saw its power of fascination on a bird: I was standing with a gentleman who heard a shrill noise, and saw a bird dropping helplessly from branch to branch; he told me he thought it was fascinated; on approaching the tree we saw the bright eye of the snake, which we disturbed; it glided back, and instantly the bird flew away.

Now loosed her ebon locks, and softly wept.

Page 33, line 14.

The Indians on momentous and afflicting occurrences, such as visitations of the devil, self-devotion, or sorrowing for their dead, dishevel their long tresses, which gives them, in this disordered state, an air of most peculiar beauty.

What! if thou cleavest Cathayan floods afar.

Page 34, line 11.

The Japan isles are thus spoken of by the Abbé Raynal :
 “ Les grandes isles qui composent cet empire, placées sous
 un ciel orageux, environnées de tempêtes, agitées par des
 volcans, sujettes à ces grands accidens de la nature qui im-
 priment la terreur, étoient remplies,” &c. &c. Tom. i. p.
 143, 12°. edit. Amsterdam, 1773.

Where rugged manacles displace the charm.

Page 36, last line.

The Hindûs have a thorough conviction of the efficacy of
 charms or amulets to avert the operation of evil spirits.

Folds pure and white as Himolaya's snows.

Page 37, line 4.

Himolaya, or the mansion of snow, is the name given by
 the Hindûs to that vast chain of mountains which limits
 India to the north, and embraces it with its eastern and
 western arms, both extending to the ocean: the former of
 those arms is called *Chandrashec'hara*, or the *moon's rock*;
 the second, which reaches as far west as the mouth of the
 Indus, was named by the ancients *Montes Pârvari*. These
 hills are held sacred by the Indians, who believe them to be
 the terrestrial haunt of the god Iswaru. The mountain
 Himolaya being personified, is represented as a powerful
 monarch whose wife was Mena; their daughter is named
Parvati, or *mountain-born*, and *Durga*, or *difficult of access*;
 but the Hindûs believe her to have been married to Siva in
 a pre-existent state, when she bore the name of Sati. The
 daughter of Himolaya had two sons, Gunesa, the lord of
 spirits, adored as the wisest of deities, and always invoked at

the beginning of every literary work; and Cumara, Scanda, or Carticeya, commander of the celestial armies.

Argument to the Hymns to Pracriti.

Sweet as the breeze from Irem's bower that blows.

Page 37, line 16.

Irem :—Celebrated, but fabulous gardens, said to have been anciently made in Arabia Felix, by a king named Shedād ben Ād, or Irem ben Omād. Frequent mention is made of these gardens by the Eastern poets, who describe them as a perfect model of that voluptuous paradise which the Mahomedans are promised by their prophet. *Richardson*, art. Irem. p. 81. vol. 1, fol. Oxford, 1777.

And called on Vishnu in that hour—her last.

Page 38, line 26.

Vishnu. The preserver: the god of infinite goodness.

Eternal state of guilt's futurity.

Page 39, line 8.

An intelligent and liberal Arab, to whom I was indebted for instruction when in India, once told me that he thought the hell of futurity would either be the retention of conscience after death, or a perpetual existence in sandy deserts destitute of streams and groves: his opinion of *heaven* was strongly in favour of paradise, as it is described by Mahomedans, and guessing my predilections (possibly from jocose conversation), he advised me to renounce my attachment to wine, for the chance of a hundred Houris.

Far o'er the wide expanse of watery mees.

Page 40, line 3.

Oh! I coulde waile mie kynge-coppe-decked mees
Mie spreadynge flockes of shepe of lillie white.

Chatterton, Ecl. 1. Roberte and Raufe.

"Ullah Kureem!" The golden dreams of youth.

Page 42, line 1.

"Ullah Kureem!" Merciful God!

"Ber to sulamut!" if I well divine.

Page 43, line 22.

*"Ber to sulamut!" Salvation be on you! or, Peace be
to you!*

Resolve me, Syed—whither art thou bent!

Page 43, line 24.

Syed: The title of the chiefs of the family of Mahommed, descended from Ali and his daughter Fatima, by whom alone the green turban should be worn; but the Mahommedans of Hindustān have indiscriminately usurped this distinction, with as much propriety indeed as our tinkers and cobblers bedeck themselves in the military costume of the day.

Proclaim'd that Carmasacshi's anxious steeds.

Page 47, line 28.

Carmasacshi is a name of Surya, the Phœbus of European Pagans.

NOTES

TO

C A N T O III.

*Sheikh Hyder to Abdullah came,
With naked feet, and low salaam.*

Page 53, line 1.

It is a polite institution in the East that no tent, temple, or house shall be entered but with naked feet: it is by no means of recent original. An allusion to this observance may be found in Joshua, chap. v. verse 15. "And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy; and Joshua did so." I regret to add that the spirit of compliance manifested by the son of Nun, does not appertain to the civilized character of *modern Christians* in the East.

To sing the charms of Mosellay.

Page 55, line 12.

The bower of Mosellay is celebrated in the poetry of Hafiz, the Anacreon of Persia.

I've rov'd the garden of Cashmir.

Page 57, line 9.

C'est une vallée délicieuse, vers l'extrémité septentrionale de l'Indostan, formée par les montagnes d'Attok et par celles du Caucase, habitée par les hommes de l'Inde les plus industriels et les plus polis, par les femmes les plus belles et les plus piquantes.—*Abbé Raynal*.

The dangerous Erythræan deep.

Page 57, line 16.

"In modern times the Red Sea is a name appropriated to the Arabian Gulf, but the ancients denominated the ocean which stretches from that gulf to India, the Erythræan Sea, from King Erythras, of whom nothing more is known than the name, which in the Greek language signifies 'red.' From this casual meaning of the word it came to be believed that it was of a different colour from other seas, and consequently of a more dangerous navigation."—*Dr. Robertson's Note and Illustration 7th Ancient India*. Not to assume the exaggerating privilege of a traveller, I beg leave to add that this ocean might have taken the name of "red" from the colour which its waves very frequently assume. This assertion will be attested by many who have sailed from the coast of Malabar, or Guzerat, to the Gulf of Cutch. The Abbé Raynal remarks, "La mer rouge qui doit son nom aux coraux, aux madrepores, aux plantes marines qui tapissent presque partout son fond, et qui lui donnent en apparence cette couleur," &c. Tom. i. p. 82.

Nor turn the holy tomes of Zend.

Page 58, line 2.

The tomes of Zend: the five books ascribed to the patriarch Abraham.

They sail'd sublime to Mutra's plain.

Page 61, line 21.

Krishen and the nine Gopia, the Apollo and Muses of the Greeks, are feigned to reside in the plains of Mutra, where Ruty, or Love, is of their company.

The fate of nations, and the universe.

Page 76, line 20.

Refer to the Précis de la Revolution Française, on the panic of Napoleon Buonaparté in the Council of Five Hundred.

NOTES

TO

C A N T O IV.

From Kāf's reflective, fundamental stone.

Page 77, line 11.

Kāf, a fabulous mountain, anciently imagined by the Asiatics to surround the world, and to bound the horizon on all sides. In the Alkorān (for even Mahommed was carried along by this popular belief,) Kāf is said to rest upon a stone, formed, according to some learned doctors, of one entire emerald, the reflection from which, they say, gives the azure appearance to the sky; whilst its movements produce earthquakes, volcanoes, and all the extraordinary phænomena of nature. *Richardson*, p. 1357, article Kāf.

When friendship pledged, and England was the theme.

Page 79, line 16.

It is a common diversion in India to send tents and provisions to the distance of fifteen or twenty miles from a cantonment to devote a few days to the sports of the field. I have often participated in the pleasure of such excursions,

and remember well that conversation generally turned on the country, which we all had left and longed to revisit. In my own country I feel equally delighted to think on another, which I love less than England, only because it is not the land of my nativity. Perhaps my recollections of happy hours in India has led me to trespass on the patience of my readers, by alluding to festivities in that delightful country. My *Indian* acquaintances will treat such an error with indulgence, and be pleased to find that my departure from the scene of their present, and my own former habitation, has in no wise diminished my sincere attachment to the many excellent and *intelligent* friends I left behind me. It is, no doubt, an easy matter for tourists and travellers to scatter indiscriminate abuse throughout a settlement denied by distance the power of timely vindication; and disappointed vanity and unaccredited pretensions will not be very scrupulous in condemning the circles which were insensible to their *occult perfections*. I would by no means imply, that my *discernment* is preferable to that of such invidious reporters, but do not hesitate to say that my *veracity* is entitled to much more respect. The *fêtes champêtres*, to which I have entrusted my uncorrupted morals in the East, were neither drunken associations; nor were the ladies, who occasionally honored our rustic amusements, of so dissolute a dye as to shock the moral sense of ordinary gentlemen. There is indeed among the ladies in the East an affability less restricted than in England, but it was hardly worthy of "*original genius*" to quit the sphere of its abstruse researches to war upon such venial levities.

Unfortunately the temper of unattractive ladies and self-sufficient moralists is apt to be captious, and to mistake petulance for sarcasm; the latter is no amiable attainment,

and when clumsily exercised, it fails to be impressive, and becomes contemptible; therefore I am persuaded that my Indian friends will still continue to cherish their profane joviality, nor will the character of Englishmen in the East be importantly hurt by the froward invective of Coromandel travellers, or the conclusive condemnation of a young gentleman, who has formed his estimate of India and its tribes during an active residence of one whole calendar year in the extensive island of Bombay.

Their kindled fury on the foe devolve.

Page 84, line 4.

I was an eye-witness of the frantic ferocity of the Rajepoot tribe on the storming of Chiah, a small but strong fortress in the province of Kattywar. When the chieftain apprehended the fall of his fort he attempted his escape, but was repulsed by some horsemen appointed to intercept his flight. Having embraced that dishonourable but unsuccessful alternative, he, in common with his troops, resolved to atone for their unworthy conduct by sacrificing themselves in defence of the fortress. When the storming party entered the breach there was a perfect silence, and no appearance of opposition; but on arriving in a small palace yard the few advanced sections of the British troops were surrounded by the Rajepoots, who sprung from several recesses, brandishing their swords and dancing with an air of savage enthusiasm. The peculiar beauty of this valiant and illustrious tribe, their long, bright, dishevelled locks, the fierceness of their purpose, the intrepidity with which they fought and died beneath the flames of the burning palace, have left a durable impression on the minds of the few officers employed on that occasion. On observing the advance of the storming

party the Raujepoots had loosed their locks, cast away the scabbards of their swords, and had drunken an intoxicating beverage called "*bang*;" but the deed which crowned these awful ceremonies was the slaughter of their wives and female children, lest their race should be polluted by the embraces of the christian conquerors. The whole of the Raujepoots perished to a man; they would not hear of quarter, nor accept of life, for every merciful disposition was manifested on the part of Colonel East, an officer too highly and generally esteemed in a professional and social point of view to require the aid of my feeble, yet, I trust, not presuming commendation.

Like the prophet in prowess and power.

Page 93, last line.

Mr. Gibbon speaks facetiously of the prophet's "natural or supernatural gift," and cites Paschasius in testimony of his surpassing vigor. "Sibi robur ad generationem, quantum triginta viri habent, inesse jactaret; ita ut unicâ horâ posset undecim fæminis satisfacere." *Petrus Paschasius*, cap. 2. The exclamation of Ali on washing the prophet's corpse is in the same intelligible terms. *See the note on Makommed's death. Gibbon*, v. 9.

As whirlwinds tear Bomullan's steep.

Page 100, line 4.

Bomullan is the name of a hill fort conspicuously situated in the romantic amphitheatre of mountains round Panwell; it is distant about twenty miles from Bombay, and was once unsuccessfully attacked by an army bearing nearly the proportion of one hundred to one against it.

His girdle and his turban took.

Page 102, line 20.

Mr. Crawford in his sketches of the Hindûs is accurate: "a woman," he says, "is forbidden to burn herself on the death of her husband, if she cannot procure his girdle and turban to place on the pile with her."



THE END.